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CORRESPONDENCE
OF
EDMUND BURKE & WILLIAM WINDHAM

CORRESPONDENCE
OF
EDMUND BURKE & WILLIAM WINDHAM

WITH OTHER ILLUSTRATIVE LETTERS FROM
THE WINDHAM PAPERS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

EDITED BY

J. P. GILSON, M.A.

ASSISTANT KEEPER OF MSS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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TO
THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS
OF

The Roxburghe Club

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT

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4, CARLTON GARDENS
29 Sept. 1910.

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CORRIGENDA.

- p. 4, l. 14, *for* Thomas Sadler *read* James Sadler.
 p. 43, l. 13, *for* war official *read* unofficial.
 p. 244, l. 18, *for* 10th May *read* 16th May.

INTRODUCTION.

THE nucleus of this volume consists of fifty-three hitherto unpublished letters of Edmund Burke to William Windham, and eight to other persons, taken from the Windham Papers acquired in 1909 by the British Museum. In order to exhibit the correspondence as a whole, and to make it intelligible to those who may not be intimately acquainted with the details of the history of the period with which it is concerned, it has been necessary to add to these more than an equal number of other letters. In the first place thirteen more letters of Burke to Windham have been reprinted either from the correspondence of Burke, published by Lord Fitzwilliam, or from Windham's *Diary*, published by Mrs Henry Baring, the originals of which do not in either case appear to have returned to the collection. Next are added ten letters of Windham to Burke, only one of which is new; so that the total of the Burke-Windham correspondence proper now amounts to seventy-six letters, the extreme dates being 1783 and 1797, though the main interest centres on the last nine years, the period between the outbreak of the French Revolution and the death of Burke. The remaining forty-two letters are selected also from the Windham Papers with a view to illustrating the subjects mentioned in Burke's letters, and with the intention of reducing to a minimum the intervention of the editor between the original correspondence and the reader. Many of these letters are important documents, worthy of publication for their own sake, and all, so far as I am aware, are hitherto unpublished. They will serve to give an idea of the wealth of material in the collection recently acquired by the nation, but it will be understood that as the selection is made for a restricted purpose, and with prescribed limits of space, they are by no means exhaustive even for the period which they cover, which is only a small part of Windham's political career. I think however that the introduction of these letters will be found of value as illus-

trating the various characters of the principal persons of the party, and will make a better picture of the state of English politics during the war against revolutionary France than could be obtained from a volume which was restricted to the letters of one or two persons, however eminent or however brilliant as writers. For the brief explanatory remarks interpolated between the letters and for the notes I have drawn upon the *Diary* and several other sources, the most important being the charming and well-edited correspondence of Lord Minto, a book which no one should fail to read, and which no one can lay down until he has acquired a singularly vivid impression of a statesman of great ability and most attractive character, as well as of two equally delightful ladies, in Elliot's wife and her sister, Lady Malmesbury. The reader will be disappointed to find in these pages only three new letters from a correspondent so free as Sir Gilbert Elliot shows himself from the stiffness by which most eighteenth century letters are marred, but Elliot's absence in Corsica removed him, after 1794, from the main current of home politics, and his correspondence on Mediterranean affairs would have carried us too far from the topics of Burke's letters.

In reality we might say that the letters in this volume have but a single subject. If we look upon the first nine letters as merely introductory the shadow of the French Revolution is over all the rest, and Burke's attitude is the same from the first to the last : an attitude to which that of Windham and his chief Whig associates becomes gradually assimilated. But the one subject is presented in an infinite variety of aspects.

Should we seek to analyse the principles of Whiggism as held by the opposition in the early part of Pitt's administration and to discover how they operated to pull the party in different directions and finally to rend it asunder, we may perhaps find a rough and ready scheme by examining these principles as interpreted by three or four of the leading spirits of the opposition. In the Duke of Portland Whiggism may be said to be mainly a party sentiment. This appears in his definition of the party as "an union of any number of persons of independent means and fortunes formed and connected together by their belief in the principles upon which the

revolution of 1688 was founded and perfected and their attachment to the present form of our government, to all its establishments and orders, religious and civil." At the first glance such a definition comes dangerously near to the blindest kind of conservatism. If not reactionary, it at least helps us little towards a theory of political progress. Really it seems hardly a caricature to say that his view is confined within a vicious circle, that the Whig party is necessary to the country because it upholds the principles of the glorious revolution, and the revolution was glorious because—it brought into power the "natural aristocracy of the country," the Whig families. At any rate the party is a prime consideration; and we must realise this perfectly honest prepossession in order to understand the Duke's prolonged hesitation before he would commit himself to an obviously inevitable rupture with Fox. That Europe should present a united front against anarchy was eminently desirable, but it seemed to him a matter of almost equal moment that these persons of independent fortunes should present a united front at home against a tyrannical sovereign and self-seeking politicians not of the Whig tradition. In Fox's Whiggism one cannot fail to see that the guiding principle is a liberal sentiment, a generous enthusiasm for liberty, which is prompt to admire and sympathise with all that is best in the French revolutionary spirit and, if not blind to its dangers, ever hopeful for the ultimate victory of liberty over tyranny and cruelty. His optimism appears in a conversation recorded by Pelham in January 1794, when Fox advocated overtures for peace with France, urging "that any government which would succeed to the existing one in France would be more aristocratical or monarchical, and consequently less likely to engage in a fresh war upon any advantages we might gain in negotiation with the existing government." Events were to give the fullest justification to Pelham's description of this as a "specious argument, involving an opinion that the existing government was the worst possible for us¹." On the other hand, when the Duke of York, a few weeks later, told Pelham that in 1792 he had urged upon Fox to join

¹ From this Pelham drew the fair conclusion that if it were indeed so we were warranted in supporting any other, that is to say, the royalists.

Pitt's administration, and had been much shocked by the reply that there was something to be said for such a course because, if there was a war, as seemed inevitable, and he, Fox, remained in opposition, he must of course be against it, Pelham's comment is that the feeling of course does the Duke credit, but that he cannot think Fox's meaning was rightly understood. Allowing for human weakness and all that may be said against the character of this particular man, Charles Fox, we may still endorse Pelham's doubts. Party was much to Fox, as it must be to all politicians of influence, but it was not the main principle of his actions. In Burke Whiggism was more of an intellectual philosophy, not indeed lacking in enthusiasm, far from it, but restricting enthusiasm to the attainment of objects unquestionably right and universal, the preservation of order and property, liberty of conscience and purity of political motive. In Windham we shall see a disciple of Burke's philosophy, but a disciple in whom the sentiment for liberty is at first stronger than the apprehension of the dangers of anarchy. When the anarchy becomes a fact and Burke's anticipations are realised, the sentiments of pity and terror overwhelm the sentiment of liberty, and Burke and Windham are again at one. What is more, they stand in regard to one part of the problem, whether right or wrong, almost alone; for it is not easy to point to any other leading statesman of the time as being definitely, consistently and willingly committed to the restoration of the French monarchy as a main object of policy. Portland, Spencer and Grenville really differ only in degree, in their conception of the objects of the war, from Pitt or Dundas. It is to all of them a war forced upon us by the government of France, against which we are entitled to defend ourselves, and to join with our allies in exacting indemnities to cover our expenses, and pledges to be held as security for the better conduct of France for the future.

In obtaining these we are doubtless entitled to make use of royalist assistance, but prudence will confine the aid afforded to them within narrow limits in view of possible future changes in our relations with the *de facto* government. They are not of course to be treated quite on the footing of deserters from the enemy's

army, for their situation and sufferings ought to command our respect and sympathy, but politically speaking we cannot disguise from ourselves that they are an embarrassment to our policy. They compel us to commit ourselves upon points which we would much rather leave open. They may, if we are not careful, involve us in inconsistencies. At Toulon, for example, we seem to stand for the constitution of 1789, while in Brittany we join in the proclamation of Louis XVIII without any proviso as to limitations upon his power. Other practical difficulties of detail continually crop up. How, for instance, are the irregular forces of invading émigrés to be financed? By assignats issued in the name of the French king? They would be too dangerous to the otherwise willing country-people among whom the invaders are to act, and on whom they must depend for most of their supplies. By English gold? The same objection applies. By genuine republican assignats? With every endeavour it is found impossible to purchase a sufficient quantity in the Netherlands or elsewhere. By forged republican assignats? It is the method the émigrés themselves prefer, but it is very awkward, and we must take the greatest pains to know nothing of the way in which they actually carry the money we give them: it is of course their affair, and if any ministerial person knows anything it must be only some discreet Mr Nepean, rarely to be betrayed, even in a secret letter¹, into mentioning that the amount of assignats to be taken is settled but not yet "what part of them ought to be real." Again, should we land a force of our own on hostile territory, we can always be prepared, in case of failure, to take it off again; but in this Chouan warfare, if anything goes wrong, it is not merely the force we brought that has to be rescued but the poor folk of all the country-side who joined with them. We can neither provide for them nor, without remorse, abandon them to their fate. These are samples of the difficulties that attend us in France. In the colonies and on the sea we may seek our indemnities with less risk, and the captures we make are far more likely to remain our permanent possessions. These are almost overwhelming arguments, and the principles to which they lead were in the main approved by the

¹ 31 Aug. 1794, Add. MS. 37874, f. 56.

country and adopted by Pitt in the conduct of the war. Not impossibly they are the only principles upon which the war could have been conducted. The question involves too many might-have-beens to be answered with any confidence, and we are bound to respect the opinions of the pilot who weathered the storm—if indeed he can be said to have weathered it, who died in one of its blackest hours, when less than two-thirds of its course, counting from 1793 to 1815, had been run. At any rate, whether right or wrong, Burke's policy was wholly different. It has been described as a policy founded upon fright, and certainly Burke's alarm at the advance of "French principles" in England was real and was exaggerated, but there is another side to it. His war-policy was not timid but courageous, perhaps impractically venturesome. Captures of islands and descents upon outlying and vulnerable parts of the French dominions might be convenient, but they did not commend themselves to him, because the damage they inflicted upon the enemy could never be vital. No advantage was worth gaining which did not lie directly on the road to Paris. We were not at war with France but with a usurping government. France, as represented actively by the émigrés, passively by the silent masses of the people suffering under Jacobin tyranny, was our friend and ally, to be assisted with our whole force. A plan of campaign was to be adopted which left no thought of retreat. Sympathy with the revolutionaries in England was to be repressed with stern measures if necessary, but in the main to be countered by stirring up a patriotic enthusiasm for the war, and a sympathetic enthusiasm for the royalist cause, which would silence the minority. The possibility or impossibility of exciting such a feeling at home seems to me the really incalculable element in the problem whether Fox or Burke or Pitt was right. The historian, essaying with difficulty, even at this distance of time, to take an impartial view of the controversy, will feel pretty sure that Burke's alarm of danger at home was exaggerated. He will see this most clearly perhaps in those very events which seemed to contemporaries to touch the bottom of national despair. The mutiny of the sailors of our lately victorious fleet appeared at the time to foreshow the loss of our one remaining weapon against

revolution. To the historian it seems rather that the moderation of the sailors' original demands and their speedy return to discipline, after what seemed to many a weak surrender by the government, were examples of national good sense even in its lowest classes, and of a spirit of self-control that might be trusted never to fall into the excesses of the French, and that they foreshadowed rather the real and final defeat of the French revolutionary danger to England at Trafalgar. But admitting this can we still be sure that English self-control and moderation in reform would have been equally safe had Fox been in power? Rather I think we must say that it was British self-control and national caution and common-sense which precluded the possibility of Fox coming into power until the danger was abated. But as to the scheme in Burke's mind, was the patriotic enthusiasm a possibility? If Burke had been a second Chatham, in the country as well as in the cabinet a great war-minister, would he have been able to inspire in the people a confidence strong enough to loosen their purse-strings for unprecedented expenditure, to the extent required for effectively supporting by British arms the royalists of La Vendée and Brittany, at the same time that we were providing millions in subsidies for the allies? It is perhaps an even more difficult question than those others which follow upon it. If he had succeeded in finding the money, was sufficient military capacity forthcoming to make effective use of it? Would the ablest dispositions on our part have availed to counterbalance that factor which in the event appears to have determined the course of history for half a generation to come, I mean the genius of Bonaparte? If the Bourbons had actually been restored would the second revolution, which was doubtless inevitable, have been in the form of a gradual and peaceable change? Who shall answer any of these with confidence? But if we cannot forget that great and unforeseeable factor, neither can we forget the long line of accidents through which the genius of Napoleon came into play, a chain of events so remarkable that had all the possible consequences of his dictatorship been present to the mind of a British statesman, we must nevertheless suppose that he would have been amply justified in acting upon the belief that the chances of it were too remote to be worth taking

into account. We have to consider that in the earlier stages of the war Napoleon is still in his Corsican period, so bent upon purely Corsican affairs as actually in 1792 to have outstayed his leave and lost his commission in the French army. After being restored to it, and as late as August 1793, we find him still talking to Lucien about the possibility of abandoning it in order to take service under the British East India Company, as affording better prospects of advancement to a good artillery officer than he looked for in France. At the end of 1793 his opportunity for obtaining at home the distinction he longed for came, it is true, but are we sure that it was not the inadequate use by Great Britain of the advantage gained at Toulon which gave him the opportunity? Yet a few weeks later Bonaparte as a Corsican became in name a British subject, and though actually and actively employed in the French army of Italy, he still had a crisis to pass through in which we may well speculate on what his course might have been, had a slight impulse from without been present to determine it, for in July occurred the execution of his principal French patrons, the Robespierres, and the danger of his sharing their fate was considerable. He was, in fact, suspended from his functions and for a time imprisoned. It would of course be possible to carry the chain of possibilities still further. There were narrowly-won victories in the campaign of 1796, and hairbreadth escapes in his career at least as late as the return from Egypt in 1798. But in the main we may well feel that England's opportunity was in the first two years of the war. Greater activity in the West might indeed have hampered Bonaparte's victorious campaigns of Italy, but, on the other hand, the pressure might merely have brought down upon the invaders a hand heavier even than that of Hoche. After October 1795 the chances of our hypothetical Chatham Redivivus were probably at an end, the expenditure of the hundreds of millions still to be added to the national debt before 1815 a necessity, such as no mere variation of British policy which could have been made in Burke's lifetime would have materially altered.

J. P. GILSON.

CHAPTER I.

FROM 1783 TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE first two letters of the correspondence refer to Windham's brief tenure of the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland. It is not necessary here to enter fully into the history of this episode. In going to Ireland as secretary to Lord Northington Windham had his first introduction into political office, but it was an entry by a blind alley. The cause or the excuse of his speedy return was a severe attack of ill health. In a private letter to Hippisley Windham speaks of it rather as the excuse. It may, however, be doubted whether that lack of self-confidence, and difficulty in steady application, which are such marked characteristics of his earlier period and colour so strongly the *Diary*, were not, to a greater extent than he knew, due to physical causes. In any case it is certain that he had accepted an uncongenial office¹ under pressure from his friends and with great reluctance.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, ff. 1, 2.)

CHARLES STREET,

TUESDAY, *May 5*, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

When I spoke to you of our friend Marlay², w^{ch} was almost at the Instant of your entering into office, though I did throw out something concerning his Irish connexions, I dwelt chiefly upon

¹ As to contemporary views of this office what Sir Gilbert Elliot wrote to his wife concerning one of Windham's successors in the Secretaryship in 1787 is to the point: "Fitzherbert's taste is so good and delicate, and his health so bad and delicate, that I think he cannot possibly survive it. That office requires nerves and bad taste, as Windham proved by flying from it."

² Richard Marlay, Dean of Ferns, afterwards Bishop of Clonfert, 1787, and of Waterford 1795—1802.

that which I felt most, and was sure you would feel most, his abilities, his honour and integrity, and the wonderful kindness, sociability and pleasantness of his Nature, w^{ch} has won him the Love of all that know him, and that remember him to be invariable in those qualities for a much longer course of years than they ought to have taken to carry him to the highest things in his profession. I spoke then to your Sentiments; now permit me to say a word to you as a politician. I really think it would be highly advantageous to my Lord Lieutenant to attach Marlay to his person, to make him the Object of his particular protection and as it were the man of his own Choice. You know he is Uncle to Grattan, and you must be sensible how much the success of Lord Northington's administration will depend not only on Grattan's formal assistance but upon his cordial and earnest support, and I am misinformed about him if he is not a man to be much more taken with an attention of this sort, than any compliance with a regular request, w^{ch} he is well entitled to make, and w^{ch} when he makes, wld. not be refused; though the doing it will not be a favour in the same kind and of the same effect with that I propose. M^r Grattan is not only a great Card himself, but the whole fund of L^d Northington's friends in Ireland are so closely united with him, that an Obligation conferred on him will very much affect them all. He is likewise so very well with the Duke of Leinster and Connolly¹, that though they may have persons nearer to them in politicks (w^{ch} by the way I don't know) I do not believe they have any Church man nearer to their Esteem and affections. The Lord Lieutenant's second choice is usually given to an Irish Interest, and I conceive it would be a very well understood thing, if Lord Northington should appear to anticipate the wishes of people of great weight on that side of the Water, by paying them the Compliment of making the Dean of Fernes his *second* Chaplain without any previous sollicitation on their part; M^r Dixon has the *first* claim, and the most forcible upon every principle, now Dr Farrant is taken off your hands by the Duke of Portland. Excuse, my d^r Windham, the Freedom w^{ch} your great partiality

¹ Thomas Conolly, Irish M.P. for co. Londonderry, an influential politician and afterwards one of the strongest supporters of the Union.

has encouraged me to take with you: the Interest of one of the oldest friends I have in the world is certainly one of my Motives in pressing this affair, but a regard to you, and your honour and satisfaction, and the advantage of a Government, in the success of^{wh} the Duke of Portland, the dearest and most honour'd name to me that exists, is so deeply concern'd is far from being excluded.

I am ever with the most sincere regard and Esteem,

My d^r Sir,

Your most faithful and obed^t humble Ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 3.)

*June 10, 1783*¹.

MY DEAR WYNDHAM,

I suppose you by this time gone through all the Ceremonies of your inauguration. When that or any other troublesome Business abates, be so good to yourself, to me, and to my friend, to pass some of your time with Lord Inchiquin². He is a man of the first Rank, and nearly allied to those of the first Rank in that Country. You will find him a man of the very best political and social principles, honest, candid, sincere, friendly. Let me add that he has for near twenty years been very particularly partial to me. So cultivate him and I shall be obliged to you.

I believe I mention'd to you young Leland, the son of D^r Leland³, an author with whose Works and reputation you are are⁴ acquainted. Pray see and countenance this young Gentleman. It is all that I am desired to do; and pray let me have the credit of having obey'd

¹ Endorsed, Received 21st.

² Murrough O'Bryen, 5th Earl of Inchiquin, afterwards 1st Marquis of Thomond.

³ Dr Thomas Leland, the historian of Ireland.

⁴ *sic*.

his father's Commands in this particular. God bless you and give you a good deliverance. When you have been jumbled a little into the Country, pray let me hear from you.

Ever my d^r Sir,
most sincerely and affectionately y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

Pray make my humble duty to my Lord Lieutenant.

The two Burke letters of 1784 and the three of 1785 are not of much importance, but they illustrate the growth of a political connexion between Windham, now (since April 1784) a member of parliament, and Fox, Burke and the Duke of Portland. One of them has another interest particularly appropriate to the present time. It refers to Windham's participation in one of the earliest balloon ascents made in England, that of ^{James} Thomas Sadler. Burke goes perhaps too far in calling Windham "the first rational being that has ever taken flight," but it would not be too much to say that he was the most self-conscious of the early aeronauts. The original notes in which he described his sensations during the voyage are preserved in Add. MS. 37925. Later in the same year (Aug.—Sept. 1785) Burke and Windham travelled together in Scotland.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 5.)

BEACONSFIELD,

THURSDAY, 14 Oct. 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

The Duke of Portland intends to be here on Sunday. I know how much it will add to his satisfaction if you should find it convenient to meet him here on that day: and I believe you will like your Company.

I have been in town for a day or two. I dined at Foxes anniversary. The meeting was numerous and they were very

steady and in very good humour with one another, with him and with their cause. As to any plan of Conduct in our Leaders there are not the faintest Traces of it, nor does it seem to occur to them that any such thing is necessary. Accordingly every thing is left to accidents: and I thought Fox had great Faith in the Chapter of that Scripture. He was well and in good spirits. My Brother, he and I dined at S^r Joshua Reynolds'.

M^{rs} Burke and Richard salute you affectionately.

I am, My dear Sir,
Your most faithful and obed^t humble Ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 7.)

BECONSFIELD,

FRIDAY, Oct. 15, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have written to you by the Post to beg y^r Company here on Sunday. The D. of Portland is to be with us. I cannot promise you any body else positively. But he is *multorum instar*, in his own intrinsick value and in his regard to you.

Ever most sincerely yours

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 9.)

[Endorsed, May 7th, 1785.]

MY D^R SIR,

What time will you receive the congratulations of your Terrestrial friends on your return to mortality? O pater anne

aliquas——iterumque ad tarda reverti corpora?¹ the rest does not hold exactly in the words. I really long to converse with you on this Voyage, as I think you are the first rational being that has taken flight.

Adieu Star triumphant and some Pity show
On us poor batlers militant below.

Y^{rs} sincerely

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 11.)

MONDAY MORN.

[Endorsed, *Nov.* 21st, 1785.]

MY D^R SIR,

My Brother tells me that you still remain in town, and not in the best health. These are things not unnaturally sorted. You have missed the good season of the Duke of Portland, so that we have fewer inducements to lead you hither. However even in Winter the air of this place is not so smoaky as that of London, and M^{rs} Burke thinks this house not the worst Hospital for convalescents. Besides the pleasure you will give those who love and value you sincerely will be a sort of medicine to such a constitution as yours.

Ever most faithfully

Y^{rs} &c.

EDM. BURKE.

I send this by a friend going to town.

No letters of Burke's to Windham for 1786 or 1787 are preserved, but casual references in the *Diary* show that the intercourse

¹ Virgil, *Aen.* vi. 719, 720:

O pater anne aliquas ad caelum hinc ire putandum est
Sublimes animas, iterumque ad tarda reuerti
Corpora?

was by no means intermitted, though it did not always run quite smoothly. Sometimes, it appears (25 April 1787), they “talked more than I could have wished about India, though not in any way that was improper.” On the 28th of the same month, upon the topic of the Prince of Wales’ marriage to Mrs Fitzherbert, Burke “descanted in a strain of superior wisdom,” but on 3 May following was “peevisish and impatient in the morning because I would not stay when he supposed he had something to say to me.” Early in 1788 it was decided that Windham should take part in the impeachment of Hastings, but there was considerable delay before the occasion came. In the autumn he travelled for about twelve weeks in France and Switzerland. The following letter to an unidentified correspondent seems worth inserting in reference to the important events which occurred soon after his return.

WINDHAM TO ———.

(Add. MS. 37873, f. 159.)

HILL STR.,

Nov. 26, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

I wish it had occurred to me sooner, that from motives at least of general anxiety, if not from any concerns of business capable of being affected by such causes, you might have been glad to receive the best accounts that were to be had of the King’s situation. It has been the fashion hitherto, and till lately was not an improper one, to speak of his Majesty’s disorder in such obscure terms, as left the nature of it quite uncertain; or if it was mentioned more particularly, to describe it as a fever. It were much to be wished that fever had more to do with it; but the fact has long been understood to be, that whatever fever his Majesty has had, has been only symptomatick, and not at all the cause of his disorder, which is pure and original insanity. The symptoms of this have been increasing by slow degrees, and for a considerable period. There is reason to think that before his journey to Cheltenham some of these had appeared and been noted; and there is no doubt that,

immediately after, the appearances were so strong at his levée, that the foreign ministers all remarked them, and thought them of such consequence as instantly to write an account of them to their courts. The immediate occasion of the Physicians being called in, and means being taken to prevent his Majesty from being seen any more in publick, is said to have happened during an airing he was taking in a Phaeton with the Princess Royal.—If there were any hopes of the King's recovery from this state, so speedily as to render the substitution of any other government unnecessary, his situation could not be concealed with too much care; but the moment that ceases to be the case, too much care cannot be taken to make it known publickly and authentically. The greatest aggravation, which such a calamity could receive,—and a calamity certainly it is so far as relates to the feelings of every one who hears it,—would be, that it sh^d be subject to any doubt and suspicion. If the King of a country is completely out of his mind, whatever sorrow may be felt for the moment, the extent of the evil is, however, known: It is, for the time it lasts, just as if the King were dead. The same persons must upon all principles of reason, and all views of the Constitution, carry on the Government, as if the King were actually dead. Should he again be restored completely to his senses, the case is then equally clear: He must be restored completely to his government. Whatever other opinions are broached or thrown out in conversation by persons on either side, that seems to me to be the plain sense of the matter, as one may possibly have to declare or act upon at least before many days.—The only case of danger and distress is where the sanity or insanity of a Monarch should be not clearly ascertained, or not generally known. To guard against that in the instance now before us, I think accounts should have been given less ambiguous, less sophisticated, and less false, than have been industriously propagated for some time past: and whatever motives of delicacy and prudence might have prevailed at first, as undoubtedly there were many, the case seems now to be so decided, the actual insanity to be so complete, and the hopes of it ever ceasing so small, that any attempt further to disguise it will lye open to very uncreditable suspicions.

I have troubled you with these particulars, thinking that you and Mr Hatfield might be anxious at least to know upon this subject, what is to be had on good authority, and am

Dear Sir, your very obedient
and faithful humble serv^t

W. WINDHAM.

The “plough” mentioned in Burke’s next letter is presumed to be some part of the Warren Hastings affair.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 13.)

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1788.

MY DEAR SIR

I am not very much pleased, as you may believe, with losing yours and Foxes company. It was some loss to you, I am persuaded, as you love to gratifye your friends; and as I was resolved to keep completely aloof from all politicks of any sort, to give some sort of truce to your Minds. Alas! I may not see either of you tomorrow. This cursed —— but much spittle must be swallowed, tho’ it create Bile elsewhere. I will not say the whole, but I am sure, the much greater part of the Evil arises from the spirit of intrigue, and of a Trust in the fidelity of Perfidy and fraud. Well! Well! Well!

However, on comparing every thing, I think we may reckon on seeing you. We had prepared our Infirmary for Fox,—every Room thoroughly warmed, and the Hall too, that the Passages might not defeat the good effect of the Rooms. As to him I think, either the same or some other Business of not half the importance of what might be serviceable to his health may detain him. If, unfortunately, things should so turn out, that he cannot come, suppose you bring S^r Gilbert¹ with you. I hope he has been hard and fast at finishing his Ideas. I am exceedingly happy, that you

¹ Elliot, afterwards Earl of Minto.

have set your hand to this plough—for little and triffling as it is, if men not occupied in higher things will decline it, men, even such men as you, must undertake it. But things more fit for you will call you, and you will not decline them.—This news from Norwich gives me very great pleasure. Your remark is certainly right, now is the time to push; and I am sure if we looked to the publick, instead of individuals, these individuals would be forced to submit to the publick, whom we cannot gain by any efforts of ours.

Adieu. I take it for granted that you will get this before twelve—your answer you will bring yourself. Adieu. A thousand thanks for what you are doing, and that the highest principles make you submit to low drudgery.

ever y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

The long letter which follows has been printed before, nor can it be said that anything in the unpublished Windham correspondence throws any important new light on the minds of his political associates during the crisis of the regency question. Luckily, however, the published letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot and other authorities have made the state of affairs sufficiently clear. The “strong expectation of things coming about,” or in other words that the Prince, as Regent, would bring in the Whigs, and the consequent attempts at provisional Cabinet making are fully set out in Elliot’s private letters to his wife¹, and quite recently Mr Sichel’s publication, in his *Sheridan*, of a sort of diary by Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, for this period, has added a large amount of detail to our information. The singular fact that at this time Burke was not considered suitable for high office even by those who sincerely believed it “impossible to do too much for him” has been thoroughly discussed by Lord Morley.

¹ See especially the letter of 10 Jan. 1789, *Life and Letters of Lord Minto*, i. p. 260, quoted by Lord Morley in his *Burke* (Engl. Men of Letters), p. 138.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iii. 88.)

BECONSFIELD,

Jan. 24, 1789.

I stayed at Brooks' on Tuesday night in hopes of seeing you, until after twelve. I had a good deal of discourse with Pelham¹, who gave me leave to flatter myself that you and he might dine with me and pass a night here between this and Monday. We have means of feeding you, though without our cook, but the dairy-maid is not a bad hand at a pinch; and we have just killed a sheep, which, though large and fat, is, I believe, full six years old, and very fine meat. I have already, I think, received some small benefit to my health by coming into the country; but this view to health, though far from unnecessary to me, was not the chief cause of my present retreat. I began to find that I was grown rather too anxious; and had begun to discover to myself and to others a solicitude relative to the present state of affairs, which, though their strange condition might well warrant it in others, is certainly less suitable to my time of life, in which all emotions are less allowed; and to which, most certainly, all human concerns ought in reason to become more indifferent, than to those who have work to do, and a good deal of day, and of inexhausted strength to do it in. I sincerely wish to withdraw myself from this scene for good and all; but, unluckily, the India business binds me in point of honour; and, whilst I am waiting for that, comes across another of a kind totally different from any that has hitherto been seen in this country, and which has been attended with consequences very different from those which ought to have been expected in this country, or in any country, from such an event. It is true I had been taught by some late proceedings, and by the character of the person principally concerned, to look for something extraordinary. With a strong sense of this, my opinion was that the prince ought to have *done* what has been *said* it was his right to do; and which might have been as safely done as was

¹ Hon. Thomas Pelham, afterwards 2nd Earl of Chichester.

unsafely said. He ought himself to have gone down to the House of Lords, and to *them* by himself, and to the House of Commons by *message*, to have desired the advice and assistance of the two Houses. His friends would then have been the *proposers*, and his enemies the *opposers*, which would have been a great advantage. The proceedings in council ought also to have originated from him ; whereas we admitted the official ministers as the king's *confidential* servants, when he had no confidence to give. The plans originated from them. We satisfied ourselves with the place of objectors and opposers,—a weak post always ; and we went out with the spirit—(if it may be so called) of *inferiority*, and of a mere common opposition, with the Prince of Wales, Regent in designation, and future King, at our head ; he unable to support us, and we unable to support him. Though I went to town strongly impressed with this idea, which I stated to Fox, when I saw him in his bed, and to others, it met so ill a reception from all to whom I mentioned it, and it seemed then a matter of course, that the men who remained in place, (as Pitt and the Chancellor did,) without character or efficiency in law, were under an exclusive obligation to take the lead ; and some were of opinion that they ought to be called upon and stimulated to the production of their plans, I was really overborne with this, I may say, almost universal conceit ; so much so, that I gave over pressing my own, and wrote to my brother, then here, that I found it necessary to give it up, and even to change it ; and on this he wrote me a strong remonstrance. Afterwards I was little consulted. This error of ours (if such it was) is fundamental, and perhaps the cause of all our subsequent disasters. I don't trouble you with these remarks as complaining of what was done, or as laying too much weight on my first opinions. In truth, things have turned out so contrary to all my rational speculation in several instances, that I dare not be very positive in what appears to me most advisable, nor am I at all disposed very severely to censure the proceedings most adverse to my own ideas. I throw out these things to you, and wish to put you in possession of my thoughts, that, if they meet with a reception in your mind, you may urge them in time and place with a force which for many reasons (perhaps

some of personal fault, or defect, or excess in myself, but most certainly from a sort of habit of having what I suggest go for nothing,) I can no more hope for. I look back to any thing that has been done or omitted, for no other purpose than to guide our proceedings in future. In the first place I observe that though there have been a very few consultations upon particular measures, there have been none at all *de summa rerum*. It has never been discussed, whether, all things taken together, in our present situation, it would not be the best or least evil course, for the public and the prince, and possibly in the end for the party, that the prince should surrender himself to his enemies and ours. Of one thing I am quite certain, that if the two Houses animated by a number of addresses to the prince and of instructions to the members should be bold enough to reserve all their pretended principles (as in case of such addresses, and instructions they certainly will do) and demand of the prince-regent to keep in these ministers, I believe it will be found very difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to resist such a requisition. It has always hitherto been thought wise, rather to foresee such an extremity, and to act in the foresight, than to submit to it when it happens; to make peace whilst there is some faint appearance of choice left on the subject, has hitherto been the policy. If that surrender should be thought necessary, then it will be for the consideration of our friends, how to do it in the manner most honourable to themselves, and the best fitted to make an impression on the public; and this, I think, would best be done in the way of a strong, well-reasoned memorial on the subject, advising the prince, for the sake of the public tranquillity, and to prevent further outrages on the constitution, to yield to the present exigence, thanking him for the justice he was willing to do to the king's subjects, and for his equity in delaying so long to yield to so wicked a proscription as that projected. This, in my poor judgment, ought to be signed by all the lords and commoners amongst us, and possibly by other notables in the country; and then, without a formal secession, to absent ourselves from parliament until favourable circumstances should call us to it. I am far from being certain that this method (this of yielding,) would not be the best, considering who the prince

is, and who, and of what stuff, we are. But if we choose the other way, which is at all events to fight it out, against a majority in the two Houses and a very great, bold, and active party without doors making, for aught I know, the majority of the Nation, then I am sure we ought to prepare ourselves for such a combat in a different manner, and to act in it with a very different spirit, from any thing which has ever yet appeared amongst us. In the first place we ought to change that tone of calm reasoning which certainly does not belong to great and affecting interests, and which has no effect but to chill and discourage those, upon whose active exertions we must depend much more than on their cold judgment. Our style of argument, so very different from that by which Lord North was run down, has another ill-effect. I know it increases the boldness of some of those who are thus bold, less from the courage of their original temperament than from the air of inferiority, debasement, and dejection, under which we have appeared for some years past. In daring every thing they see they risk nothing. Far from apprehending any mischief from our future just resentment, they are not troubled with any degree of present disgrace, or even with a hard word, or a reflection on their character,—two or three trifling instances excepted. I suppose a more excellent speech than Fox's last has never been delivered in any House of Parliament; full of weighty argument, eloquently enforced, and richly, though soberly decorated. But we must all be sensible that it was a speech which might be spoken upon an important difference between the best friends, and where the parties had the very best opinion of each other's general intentions for the public good. Mr Pitt commended, as he had reason to do, the singular moderation of a speech Mr Fox had made before, with an oblique reflection on those who had debated in another manner. If a foreseen coalition with Mr Pitt should make this style of debate advisable for Mr Fox, the word ought to be given to others, who may bring much mischief on themselves, when such a coalition shall be made, for having spoken of Mr Pitt's conduct as highly corrupt, factious, and criminal; and in the mean time, they may be considered as hot and intemperate zealots of a party, with the main springs of whose politics they are

not acquainted, so far as to the general style of debate. I will trouble you, on this point, with a word on the use we may make of the degree of strength we possess in both Houses:—We are a minority; but then we are a very large minority; and I never knew an instance in which such numbers did not keep a majority in considerable awe. This was the case in a parliament of recognized authority. But in the present case it is universally admitted that the acts of the two Houses are not legal, but to be legalized hereafter, and that our proceedings are not founded upon any thing but necessity. The submission therefore of the smaller number to the greater is a mere voluntary act, and not an acquiescence in a legal decision. I see no sort of reason to hinder us from protesting on the journals; or if they prevent us from that, from publishing strong manifestoes signed with our names. Our conduct cannot be more irregular than theirs. If it is objected that this principle might lead us a great deal further, I confess it; but then, their principle would lead them further too; and they have, in fact, gone to ten times worse and more serious lengths against the substance and the solid maxims of our government, than we can be suspected of going, who, should we take the steps I suggest, only trespass against form and decorum. But whilst they neither attend to form or to substance, and while we are the slaves of form, it is self evident that we do not engage upon equal terms. I do not dwell upon this point so much for the sake of this measure (which I wish rather we did not think forbidden than that I pressinglly recommend) but for another and more serious reason. When I consider the change of Mr Pitt's language, I am convinced that an intention is entertained of addressing the prince to keep him in power. To the last day's debate he constantly spoke of himself as virtually out of place, and of Mr Fox as minister in certain designation. That day he totally changed his note. His friend Mr Rolle had arrived with his address from Devonshire. Are any on our part to advise the prince not to comply with that address? Or are we to consider ourselves as bound by the faith which Mr Sheridan has held on the part of the prince that he will comply with the requisition of the House of Commons? To what to attribute the two voluntary declarations

made by Sheridan on that subject, especially the last, I am wholly at a loss. If the prince has authorized him to speak in this manner, all that I have said, or have to say, on this side of the alternative, is vain and useless. We must submit, and there is an end of it. Even without this declaration, the difficulty in opposing such an address, though from an House framed on principles directly contradictory to those addresses, would be very great. I should contend as much as any one, perhaps more, for the constitutional propriety of the king's submitting, in every part of his executive government to the advice of parliament. But this, like every other principle, can bear a practical superstructure of only a certain weight. If the two Houses, without any sort of reason, merely from faction and caprice, should attempt to arrogate to themselves, under the name of advice, the whole power and authority of the crown, the monarchy would be an useless incumbrance on the country, if it were not able to make a stand against such attempts. If, then, such a stand is to be made, my opinion is, first, that the way ought to be prepared for it by a previous strong remonstrance to the House of Commons from Westminster against their whole proceedings. I am told we may depend upon Westminster. If we may, then I think it, from its vicinity and the habitation in it of so many people from all parts of the kingdom (which make it a sort of general representative of the whole), of more importance than any other whatsoever, if properly used, and if the means are taken, which were taken on the accession of the present royal family, by the Duke of Newcastle and others, to keep up and direct a spirit capable of seconding their petitions and addresses. I am not in general very fond of these things; but on occasions they must be used, and I hope they are not among the *artes perditæ*. They have the monied interest; let us use the interest of those whose property is their freedom. Other places will probably follow; but so far as I can discern no attempt has yet been made to do more than merely to prevent the corporations, or people, from appearing against us, Bristol excepted, where my brother and his friends in the corporation attempted more but did not succeed. I should recommend that the same should be attempted where it might be more likely to succeed; but what I contend for in all these

attempts is, that we should not at all hold ourselves on the *defensive*; a part which in such affairs as these has never failed to bring ruin on those who have chosen to occupy it. The people, to be animated, must seem to have some motive to *action*; and accusation has more to engage their attention than apology, which always implies at least a possibility of guilt;—it is something abject at best. In order to prevent where we can do no better, or to act where we can act, I am clear that none but a corps of observation ought to attend parliament. We ought to give over all thoughts of division; and the members who have any interest ought to be sent down to their several districts. It was the present king and the present ministers who have made, and who continue, this parliament out of doors. It is now fixed, and it is for us to take our advantage of the actual state of the country, which is to the best of their power employed against us; at least until we shall be furnished with the means of establishing the constitutional bodies of the kingdom in the degree of sober independence, and decent respect, which they ought to enjoy. Whilst these and other obvious measures are going on abroad, the great security for their success, or the great remedy for their failure, is in the conduct of the prince himself. On that more depends than on all the rest. All his actions, and all his declarations, ought to be regular, and the consequences of a plan; and if he refuses to comply with the addresses, he ought, once for all, to give them an answer, which should be as much reasoned as his situation will admit, and which will serve for a manifesto. All his written proceedings must be so many manifestoes; for he will not be in government by being appointed regent, but only in a situation to contend for it. Dead, cold, formal pieces, containing no sentiment to interest the feelings, and no animated argument to go to the understanding, may serve well enough when power is secure and able to stand on its own foundations; but in this precarious show of government, a party must be made, and it must be made as parties are formed in other cases. There is not one rule, principle or maxim of a settled government that would be useful to us,—that of general good conduct excepted. That which I should chiefly rely upon, in all these manifestoes, is a sentiment of dignity and independence, and an

indifference to the object unless it can be held on those terms. If this, indeed, be not supported by a degree of courage, either natural or infused, and a *real* resolution rather to forfeit every thing than his own honour, and the safety of those embarked with him in the same bottom, to be sure, such a style of speaking would be unsuitable and mischievous; but if the conduct and declarations are of a piece, I think they can hardly fail of success in the end;—I say in the *end*, for we deceive ourselves woefully if we are not at the very opening of a dreadful struggle. All these and every thing else however depend upon that; which if nobody has spirit and integrity enough to inculcate into the prince, he is, and we are, ruined. He must marry into one of the sovereign houses of Europe. Till then he will be liable to every suspicion, and to daily insult. He will not be considered as one of the corps of princes, nor aggregated to that body, which people here, more even than in other countries, are made to look at with respect. There must be a queen for the women, or a person to represent one, else *this* queen will have them all. I say this independently of the suggestion concerning Mrs Fitzherbert, which I know to have great weight, and much the greatest in the extremities of the kingdom. No king in Europe, who is not married, or has not been so: no prince appears settled, unless he puts himself into the situation of the father of a family.

I began this with a notion that I could bring all I had to say into a few short heads; but I have been drawn into a length that I did not expect. One thing or other has taken me off; so that I must deliver myself the letter which I thought was to bring you hither. Perhaps what I have thrown down is of little moment; at any rate it is in safe hands,—it is in the hands of one who will pardon and will conceal my weakness. Adieu.

And believe me ever sincerely and
affectionately yours

EDM. BURKE.

Of Windham's two speeches on this business of the Regency Bill, the second, as we learn from the *Diary* (10 Feb.), was made in response to a direct request from Burke, but in the month following (12 March) their friendship was endangered by Burke's intemperate vehemence on a private matter, a discussion on the affair of Baret's trial. "I must endeavour," Windham notes, "to obliterate from my mind the impression which passion so unreasonable and manners so rude would be apt to leave." Later in the same year, 1789, Windham was again travelling in France, 12 Aug. to 9 Sept., but the *Diary* does not tell us much to satisfy the natural curiosity expressed by Burke in the first letter of the next chapter. The travellers had been warned of some danger, but do not seem to have actually experienced anything worse than a slight difficulty about passports.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION TO THE
DECLARATION OF WAR.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 15.)

BECONSFIELD,

Sept. 27, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is very true that I promised myself the satisfaction of seeing you very soon after your return from the Land of Liberty. I am sure I was very glad of your *safe* return from it: for though I had no doubt of your prudence, where no duty called you to the utterance of dangerous truths, yet I could not feel perfectly at my ease for the situation of any friend, in a Country where the people, along with their political servitude, have thrown off the Yoke of Laws and morals. I could certainly wish to talk over the details and circumstances with you. But the main matter consists in the results, and in the general impression made upon you by what you have seen and heard: and this you have been so kind to communicate. That they should settle their constitution, with^t much struggle, on paper, I can easily believe; because at present the Interests of the Crown have no party, certainly no armed party, to support them; But I have great doubts whether any form of Government w^{ch} they can establish will procure obedience; especially obedience in the article of Taxation. In the destruction of the old Revenue constitution they find no difficulties—but with what to supply them is the Opus. You are undoubtedly better able to judge; but it does not appear to me that the National Assembly have one Jot more power than the King; whilst they lead or follow the popular voice, in the subversion of all orders, distinctions, privileges, impositions, Tythes and rents, they appear omnipotent, but I very

much question, whether they are in a condition to exercise any function of decided authority—or even whether they are possessed of any real deliberative capacity, or the exercise of free Judgment in any point whatever : as there is a Mob of their constituents ready to Hang them if they should deviate into moderation, or in the least depart from the spirit of those they represent. What has happened puts all speculation to the blush ; but still I should doubt, whether in the End France is susceptible of the Democracy that is the Spirit, and in a good measure too, the form, of the constitution they have in hand. It is, except the Idea of the Crown being Hereditary, much more truly democratical than that of North America. My son has got a letter from France which paints the miserable and precarious situation of all people of property in dreadful colours. Indeed the particular details leave no doubt of it. Pray let me hear from you again, for I fear it will not be in my power to go to you or to our friend Dudley North—and I wish much to know whether the manoeuvres of the Enemies of honour and common sense have made any way at Norwich ; for I had much rather you were the Spectator, than the victim of popular madness. Adieu my d^r friend and believe me ever with the most sincere attachment truly y^{rs}.

EDM. BURKE.

If we cannot tell much of what was in Windham's mind as to the early stages of the Revolution, by the time of the next letter it was beginning to be known to his circle, and was soon to be known to all the world, what Burke thought of it.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add MS. 37843, f. 19.)

Oct. 27, 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have seen a letter of yours to S^r Joshua Reynolds, which was one of the pleasantest I ever read, except in one short sentence, or rather part of a sentence. The pleasant part, you may think, was your desire of the publication of my Letter¹ of which you

¹ *Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

had seen the beginning. But though this was flattering to me on every account, I hope you will think I speak of the general Tenour of your Letter, and not the little which touched my selfish feelings. If you had seen the middle and end as well as the beginning of my Book, you would have given me such Lights, as might [make] you perhaps the less repent of your wish of my holding up my hand to be tried by my Country. God send me a good deliverance. To you I do not send it to be tried, but to be protected: It goes to an Asylum and not to a Court of Justice; for I should be sorry, that you were as well qualified to be my Judge by your impartiality, as your are by your penetration and your skill. You dropped a word as if you thought I had not been quite fair in some of my representations. This gave me a good deal of uneasiness. In this View I looked over what I had written with some attention. It is possible enough, that in the infinite variety of matter contained in my general subject I may have made some mistakes, and I wrote sometimes in circumstances not favourable to accuracy. I wrote from the Memory of what I had read: and was not able always to get the documents from whence I had been supplied, when I wished to verifie my facts with precision. But I hope my errors will be found to be rather mistakes than misrepresentations. I am quite sure that in most of my statements, I have rather shot short of the mark than beyond it. However, where I have erred, I wish to be corrected: and shall¹ certainly if the Letter (now a Book) which I send you should come to a new Edition, I shall thankfully avail myself of the advice I may receive from you. Accept then this mark of my sincere respect and affection, the last I sincerely hope of the kind, with which I shall ever trouble my friends or the publick. Adieu and believe all here your¹ very sincerely yours and that I am with the most perfect attachment,

My d^r Sir,

y^r most faithful and obed^t humble ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

I send the Book to your house in Hill Street.

¹ *sic.*

An extract from the *Diary* (p. 212) gives Windham's opinion on the completed tract.

"On Thursday I conceive it was, that a material incident happened—the arrival of Mr Burke's pamphlet. Never was there, I suppose, a work so valuable in its kind, or that displayed powers of so extraordinary a nature. It is a work that may seem capable of overturning the National Assembly, and turning the stream of opinion throughout Europe. One would think that the author of such a work would be called to the government of his country by the combined voice of every man in it. What shall be said of the state of things when it is remembered that the writer is a man decried, persecuted and proscribed; not being much valued even by his own party, and by half the nation considered as little better than an ingenious madman!"

How far-reaching were the actual effects of the pamphlet on the public opinion, not only of this country but of all Europe, has been so eloquently set forth by Lord Morley, that it would be useless to dwell upon it here¹.

Notwithstanding the admiration above expressed for Burke's political principles as exhibited in the *Reflections* the time was not yet come for Windham to adopt them so unreservedly as to separate himself from Fox, and that a parting between Burke and Fox was imminent became soon alarmingly evident. The increasing vehemence of Burke's language in the *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly* (Jan. 1791) and Fox's open disapproval of both tracts made the danger clear to all, but they were still ostensibly in unison on 29 March, when Windham rose to answer Pitt on the armament against Russia and was "well satisfied that Burke's rising at the

¹ Among the tributes of admiration which it evoked at home was an address from graduates of Oxford University conveyed to him through Windham. The answer to this, dated 21 Dec. 1790, is in form a letter to Windham, but it is naturally in a different tone from the private correspondence, and as it has been more than once printed (*Corr.* III. p. 180, and *Prior's Life*, 1826, II. p. 108) it does not seem necessary to reproduce it here. In point of fact the value of the compliment from the University was spoilt, to Burke's mind, by the failure of an attempt made at this time to procure for him the offer of an honorary degree. So much so, that when, in 1792, the degree was eventually offered, Burke refused to accept it.

same time gave me an opportunity to remain silent." Fox's speech of 15 April¹ in which he called the new French constitution "the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time or country," made it purely a question of time how soon an open rupture would take place². The state of tension is shown by the *Diary* for 22 April when Windham "had a good deal of conversation with Sir Gilbert [Elliot] on the discussion intended to be introduced by Burke relative to the Canada Bill; on which subject we agreed so little and Sir Gilbert did in my opinion show so much asperity that we parted, I am afraid, not quite in charity with each other. Burke was there, but I was glad to avail myself of the conversation in which I had been engaged in the corner of the room, so as to go away without speaking to him." On 6 May the well-known scene in the House of Commons between Burke and Fox took place, and Windham's entry, "Fatal day of rupture with Burke," indicates on which side he felt himself to be. On the 15th he found it necessary to decline an invitation from Lord Petre until he learnt that Burke would not be there. Next day however he expresses his satisfaction at receiving in the House "some overtures of reconciliation from Burke," but in the following letter to Gurney there is evidence both of the persistence of a partial estrangement between them for the next twelve months, and of the earliest stages of a fresh understanding based upon their joint resistance to what they thought inopportune proposals for parliamentary reform.

¹ *Speeches* (1815) iv. p. 195.

² It only failed to follow immediately because the House insisted on a division taking place at once. It is curious that Windham says nothing of this incident in his *Diary* for 15 April. He had spoken earlier in the debate, and perhaps he left the House before it was concluded.

WINDHAM TO JOHN GURNEY.

(Add. MS. 37873, f. 172.)

HILL STR.,

May 2nd, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

My mind is so full of the measures which made the subject of our debate on Monday¹—that I can hardly forbear writing or speaking to any friend, who[m] I think likely to have ideas at all similar to my own upon the subject; though my declaration upon the occasion was not exactly what some of the people since have put in my mouth: that whenever or in whatever shape a motion for Parliamentary Reform was brought forward, I would oppose it (such a declaration exceeding even my objections to Parliamentary Reform, and being such as no man hardly would make). Yet nothing can be more decided than my hostility to the measures now pursuing, nor than my determination to oppose them to the utmost extremity.

You will not be surprised at this declaration, when I tell you, as I did to the House—though they have omitted, I see, in the papers that part of what I said—that in my opinion this is little short of the commencement of Civil Troubles. I can consider it as nothing but the first big drops of that storm, which having already deluged France is driving fast to this Country. I have in general been far from adverse to the principles and course of the French Revolution. So much otherwise indeed, that from the beginning almost Mr Burke and I have never exchanged a word on the subject. But when an attempt is made to bring the same principles home to us, principles in a great measure extravagant and false, and which at best have no practical application here, I shall ever prove myself as violent an opposer of them as Mr Burke or any one can be.

It is as the commencement of changes similar to those that have taken place in France, that I view the measures now declared; though far from being so considered or intended on the part of the authors of them, or of the greater number possibly of those by whom they may be supported. I think, however, that this is the conclusion

¹ Charles Grey's notice of motion for reform, made in accordance with a resolution of the Association of Friends of the People, 26 April 1792.

to which they are directly and rapidly tending ; and which can only be prevented by a timely alarm spread among all people who may think the happiness which this country has hitherto enjoyed too valuable to be risked on experiments, hitherto unconfirmed by anything like an adequate trial, nor recommended even by any theory (if theory on such subjects were worth a farthing) that has been known in the world till within these half-dozen years.

Mr Grey and some other Gentlemen, men very respectable both for their talents and characters and with whom I am most closely connected, seeing this danger, and feeling about it as I do myself, are of opinion, or rather were (for I am not sure whether already some of them do not begin to be alarmed), that the only way to avert this danger was to anticipate its arrival, and by timely concession, and changes temperately and judiciously made, to quiet the minds of people, and defeat the projects of those who may wish for changes of a different character. Undoubtedly this is a Policy very easily understood, and that may in various cases be the best to be pursued. It would have been happy had this been followed in the case of America ; it would have been wise to have done the same thing in the case of Ireland ; it is to be wished that the same course were pursued with respect to the Catholicks of Ireland at this moment. But this Policy, though often good, is, like every other prudential measure, very often not so, and the question is whether it is so or not in the present instance. I am setting aside for the present all consideration of the measures themselves which they propose, viz.: the enlarging the representation, and shortening the duration of Parliament,—the former of which may possibly in a very moderate degree be desirable rather than not, and the latter of which I conceive to be clearly hurtful ; I am considering them merely with a view to the effect which they propose by them, of defeating the schemes of those who mean nothing short of a complete overthrow of the present constitution. Now for this purpose I am persuaded they will produce an effect directly the reverse of that which their authors intend ; and this opinion I ground upon the consideration, that their reform, should they ever introduce it, would only be one of many thousands which others have proposed, who of consequence

will be as little satisfied with Mr Grey's Reform or Constitution, as He or they may now be with the present one. You cannot with one measure satisfy all schemes. Your measures can be but one; your schemes are infinite, many of them the most discordant and opposite. Does He suppose for instance, that by any plan which He will recommend He will satisfy those who say that every Government is an usurpation upon the rights of man, in which every Individual has not a vote? Does He suppose, that He can ever form a House of Commons, from which influence, much of it undue, will be excluded, or on which such influence, whether existing or not, may not always be charged? When the principle of change, such as that now adopted, is once established, of change not founded on a comparison of a specifick grievance with a specifick remedy, but proceeding on a general speculation of benefit to arise from this or that mode of constituting a Parliament, what is there that is to put a stop to it, till we run the full career of all that the speculators of the present day may wish to drive us to? We must not shut our eyes to the fact, that there is at this time a spirit very generally diffused, as it has been very wickedly excited, of changing the present constitution of things without any distinct view of what is to be substituted in its room. The promoters of this spirit call the means which they apply an appeal to reason. But to whose reason do they appeal? To the reason of those who they know can be no judges of the question. To the reason of the very lower orders of the Community, whom it is easy to make discontented, as their situation must ever render them too apt to be, but whom no man, not meaning to betray them, would ever erect into judges of the first moral principles of governments, or of the advantages or disadvantages of great political measures. It will be well worth the while of people not indifferent to their own interests, whatever experiments they may wish [to] make with those of other people, to consider, whether this Practice of teaching all the world to submit to nothing, but what their reason can satisfy them of the truth of, may not proceed in time to lengths which they will not much like; and whether they do not conceive, that upon this doctrine of natural rights arguments might be brought, such at least as an audience of labouring men may think satisfactory,

why there should be an equality of property as well as an equality of voting. Hints of this sort have already been thrown out, I think in Mr Payne's pamphlet¹. I am sure it would not be difficult to improve them in a way to make them circulate among the lower people, as rapidly as arguments about the Principles of Government are said now to do among the workmen at Sheffield. They have already abolished in France all titles and distinctions, a species of property surely as innocent as any that can be conceived, and which on being given to one man does not seem to take anything from another. They have abolished likewise in great measure the right of persons to dispose of their property by will. What are all the laws of property but the mere creatures of arbitrary appointment? and who shall be able to derive any one of them by a regular deduction from natural rights, so at least as not to admit endless disputes about the authenticity of the pedigree? Suppose some one should take it into their head to write a work addressed to the labouring people, exposing to them the iniquity of that system which condemns half the world to labour for the other, and pleading for such a partition of goods as may give to every one a competence, and leave to none a superfluity: I am certainly not meaning to say that such arguments would be good ones; I am not meaning to say that they might not be easily answered, but I should be sorry to undertake to answer them in an auditory such as composes the majority of every parish in England. For some time the habitual respect, which the laws have taught for property, would perhaps prevail; but when you have once well taught men to consider the power from which such laws proceed, as all usurpation; how much longer will the respect remain for regulations, unfavourable to their interests, which that power has ordained? How long will men acquiesce in laws, which condemn them to poverty, when they are to be maintained on no other ground than such agreement as they can discern in them with natural rights? Why publications of this sort should not be put forth I don't see. You cannot punish them on any principles, which permit the publication of many works now circulating; and you cannot dispute the competency of the common people to judge

¹ Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*, published in 1791 and 1792.

of the question of property, when you allow them to be judges of what are certainly not less difficult, the first principles of Government.

But I will not tire you nor myself by going on with this subject, on which one might write volumes without stating all the wildness and danger of the principles now abroad. My own serious opinion is that unless men of all descriptions unite to say that they will not, on mere general hopes of improvement, consent to change a state of things which has produced, and is still producing, a degree of happiness security and liberty unknown hitherto in the world, we shall, before we are aware of it, be involved in all the horrors of civil confusion. If we are, it will be an example of human folly and madness, such as the world has never yet exhibited. That a nation great and happy as this is, raised to a degree of splendour, that has made us the admiration of the world, enjoying the most perfect liberty united with all the blessings of order, possessing at this moment peculiar advantages from the distracted state of many countries around us, and seeing in no country any one advantage that we do not enjoy ourselves in a superior degree,—that such a nation should at once, upon the mere assurance of certain persons, that they can make us better, put all these blessings to hazard and risk the falling into universal confusion, is a degree of extravagance, which can be called by no name but that of madness. In such madness, as it appears to me, I for one will not be a partaker. I hope that among my friends at Norwich there are many that are in the same sentiments. Such sentiments are I am sure very much wanted: and there is nowhere that I should so much wish to find them, as among persons with whom I am otherwise so much connected.

Believe me to be, Dear Sir,

your very faithful humble servant

W. WINDHAM.

In 1792 the Duke of Portland was elected Chancellor of Oxford University. The following is probably part of a circular letter written by Burke to friends on the occasion.

BURKE TO ———.

(Add. 37843, f. 21.)

[Headed, "Extract of a Letter from Mr Burke."]

BECONSFIELD,

Aug. 7, 1792.

I had before heard of the nominating the Duke of Portland to succeed Lord Guildford in the Chancellorship of the University. I wish most heartily that my interest in that Learned Body were equal to my Zeal for its Welfare ; and that Zeal would direct every particle of that Interest to the Support of the Duke of Portland. I know his Grace's attachment to the University, to the Church of England and to the cause of Literature, Virtue, and orderly, manly, and well-understood Freedom, on the principles of this antient tried constitution, against all innovation whatsoever : and I am thoroughly persuaded that a greater Service to these important Objects, at this critical time, cannot be done than by the Election of the Duke of Portland to this Office. The Man, the time and the Object all speak for it. If I were at all intitled to take that Liberty, I would solicit you on the occasion—and if I have any friends whose presence at Oxford, on this occasion I may not know, I beg the favour of you, most earnestly, and with my most humble Respects, to inform them of my opinion and wishes with regard to this matter of no small moment I am persuaded both to the Church, and the State. I have the honour to be with the greatest Respect and regard

My dear Sir,

your most faithful and Obed^t humble Serv^t

EDM. BURKE.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 5.)

BULSTRODE,

SATURDAY EVEN. 13 Oct. 1792.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

I am not without my fears that this Letter may increase the gloom into which the D. of Brunswick's Return¹ has very naturally thrown you, because you will find no contradiction or any explanation of the Event but what you have already seen in the Papers, which in my apprehension very sufficiently accounts for it, because since it took place I have not received a single line of intelligence from any person whatever. I met a person belonging to the Sec^{ry} of State's Office the beginning of this week, who assured me that every-body now knew as much of France as Ministers did, and probably more, for that Thellusson² received the earliest and best information from thence, and he believed that what came to the Sec^{ry} of State's Office was the last and the worst. All I have to send you therefore are my hopes, and they are confident and not wholly unfounded, that there is too large a portion of good sense, or self-interest, or indolence, or indecision, or dislike of novelty, or attachment to old Habits, or in short something, that if it is not good sense will be a substitute for it, which will prevent our being overrun by French Principles; and as for French *Arms* my dread of them will not disturb me much, for I do not believe that anything could so effectually animate and unite us as an armed attempt from France to force us to accept Anarchy. You see that I am of opinion that we have both vigor and wisdom sufficient to resist such an

¹ The retreat of the allies after Valmy, due to the strategy of Dumouriez and Kellermann.

² Peter Thellusson, father of the first Lord Rendlesham. Of French Protestant origin, he came to London from Geneva and acquired there a very considerable fortune in trade. His eccentric will, by which the money was tied up to accumulate for his remote descendants, was regarded as a national danger. It was supposed that before it became available for spending it might amount to 140 millions of pounds, and legislation was carried through to prevent such arrangements in future. In the event however it dwindled to a moderate sum.

attempt and that opinion is founded on the very general diffusion and distribution of property, the perfect security in which it is enjoyed, the great opulence and prosperity of the Country, and the superabundance of employment and wages for the Manufacturers of all descriptions, who are the most and indeed the only turbulent part of our community. The Army, small as it is, I believe to be perfectly safe and to be depended upon, and quite sufficient to support the Civil Power, which with the countenance it will derive from the military is very able, with the assistance of the well disposed part of the Community, to preserve good order and defeat any hostile designs or undertakings against the present Constitution of our Government. I am sure there are *Men* in this country (and there does not appear to have been *one* in France), for though it has been the system of the present Reign to annihilate them, in that it has not succeeded, and they still exist—and I trust and believe those will be found enough to save the Country, even from being attempted. I do not know whether you will concur with me on this point, and perhaps it is as well you should not, for too much and too general Confidence might ruin us. Do you therefore continue to despond and to exert yourself, and I will be sanguine and not idle.

Yours ever

PORTLAND.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR TO WINDHAM'S ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.

A USEFUL summary of the political situation at the end of 1792 and the beginning of 1793 is afforded by the following letter from Windham to his old friend John Coxe Hippisley. Hippisley, of whom we shall soon hear more, had left England in the late autumn for Italy, where he had access to influential quarters through his brother-in-law, a Roman nobleman. In the meantime the Convention had, on 1 Feb., declared war against the rulers of England and Holland, and the British declaration had followed ten days later. The defeat and defection of Dumouriez were only incidents in a series of disasters to the French in the first few months of the war.

WINDHAM TO J. COXE HIPPISELEY.

(Add. MS. 37848, f. 55.)

LONDON,
March 28th, 1793.

MY DEAR HIPPISELEY,

I have already much to answer for in having delayed so long to write at a time when you must be so impatient for letters, and when you have given yourself such a claim to them from me by the numerous ones which I have received. It is the sense of my obligations in that respect, and the ideas conceived of what I ought to do in return, that has till now repressed my endeavours, and threatens without care to throw me into as bad a state as during the time of your absence in India. Experience of that danger makes me resolve to break my chains by times; I have accordingly seized my pen this morning, determined to write a page before I pull off my night cap; and not to go out of the House, till I have got upon

paper such a quantity as I may venture to send off by next post, should I be unable even to make any additions to it.

Where shall I begin? and what order shall I follow? What shall I consider as most important? and where shall I consider you as most uninformed, and most desirous therefore of information from me? The points probably most necessary will be those that you can least learn from publick accounts; and such will be the general history of our domestick and party politicks, particularly as affecting that class of men about whom you are most interested.

You know what the state of my mind was respecting the situation of Europe, and the progress to be apprehended of those changes, which were gaining daily new strength, and which were never likely to stop of themselves, till they effected the dissolution of all the subsisting governments. The reasons for these fears went on increasing, in respect both of the progress of the French arms, and of the correspondent opinions in this country, till some time, as I recollect, after your departure. They seemed then to be brought to a sort of crisis, at which some immediate explosion was to be apprehended. I am not sure whether this was before or just after your departure, but it was towards the end of November. You must consider this as a sort of fixed point, with reference to which the history of these times is to be graduated. The despondency of those who have been distinguished since as the sect of alarmists was then at its lowest ebb.—Among those who happened to be at that time in London I was among the most eager for calling together whatever force of counsel could be collected, in order to consider what should be done. The general opinion was that an intimation should be given to Ministry, serving in one view as a menace, and in another as an encouragement, that those by whom they had been supported, at the time of the Proclamation, would not fail them in any measures which they might think it necessary to take in the present circumstances; and that, in the opinion of the persons comprehended under that description, measures vigorous and decisive, both internal and external, ought to be taken. This was accordingly done; and though the intimation so conveyed was not so explicit nor so strong as I could have wished, it is not impos-

sible, that on that little circumstance much of the subsequent conduct of Government: much, in consequence, of that of the dispositions and plans of Foreign powers; and much therefore, in the end, of the fate of Europe, may have turned. I have always been a great tracer of the effect of little things; and the opinion, that this step, seemingly so inconsiderable, may have led to consequences thus important, is a reflexion of great comfort and satisfaction to me who had some share in it, and who rejoice so much in those consequences. The sentiments of Fox in the mean while remained in a great measure unknown. He had been absent from Town during the greater part of the summer, and little more was known of his Opinion, than what I had collected in a short conversation in my way from Norfolk to London, previous to the retreat of the combined Army, and to those events which made so large a part of the present crisis. My own expectations were not very sanguine; and the result of three or four conversations, to which He seemed to be dragged rather unwillingly, gave me an early impression, that our difference was not of a temporary or superficial sort, but was such as was likely to lead us, without some unexpected turn of things, wider and wider from each other. It was not a difference capable of being reduced to specifick points, and of being confined therefore within precise limits, but a general difference of feeling that pervaded all our sentiments on the present state of the world. This opinion, admitted as you may suppose with great reluctance, and at first with considerable hesitation, has alas! been growing stronger and stronger, as the scene has opened; till now that we have passed the question of war, without being able to find in that an occasion of union, there is nothing as far as the eye can reach, that affords a prospect of our coming together.—The situation in which we stand, and the persons comprized in one or other description, you know probably, partly from the accounts of the debates, and partly from private letters.—It may be more necessary to say something of the situation and sentiments of the D. of P.—For his sentiments, they have been on all occasions, except on the bill now depending to prevent treasonable Correspondence &c., the same as Sir Gilbert's and mine; who have never differed yet in any instance.—His opinions and feelings on the

Affairs of France, his ideas of the State of this Country, his wishes for war, and his intentions of supporting Ministry, till he was talked out of them by other counsellors, were all the same as ours. But his situation is such as no nicety of conduct can make consistent with itself, and as has been the parent of all his difficulties and all his perplexities, and of such loss of personal consequence as it will be difficult Ever to repair. He has conceived that his present difference with Fox could be treated as a difference on a particular point; and be reconciled with a continuance of party connection. The consequence of which is, that He is acting in party with a man with whom He never agrees, and is joining with him to overturn the power of those by whom his own system is supported. One of the effects of this situation, illustrating the original falseness of the conception, is that He can take no step to aid and cooperate with those with whom he concurs in opinion. To obviate so strange a consequence was the object of that conference, which produced the declaration from Sir Gilbert Elliot¹, about which you have heard probably a good deal, and which has drawn upon him a great deal of enmity from that side. —It was proposed to the D. to put himself at the head of those whose sentiments he agreed with; and to allow them still to consider themselves as acting under their original Chief. To this it was thought at first that we had an explicit consent; but all was afterwards embroiled, and confused, till in point of fact we all find ourselves now acting without a leader, and with no other concert than that which we have been able to make out among ourselves.

The only meetings therefore of the party, that have taken place on our side, have been at my house². Much against my will I have

¹ On the second reading of the Alien Bill, 28 Dec. 1792. Fox and his associates complained, not unfairly, that the Duke's approbation of the bill should have been made known to them for the first time not by his own mouth but by a speech of Sir Gilbert Elliot in the House of Commons, see Lord John Russell's *Life of Fox*, II. pp. 317—318. The authorisation for Elliot's declaration was obtained on 24 Dec. by a deputation from a meeting held at Lord Malmesbury's the previous day, see *Life and Letters of Lord Minto*, II. p. 92.

² *I.e.* after 28 Dec. 1792. The dates of the meetings Windham in his *Diary* characteristically records that he did not remember, but one seems to have been on 9 Feb. Sir Gilbert Elliot, whose opinion of the Duke of Portland's unsteadiness at this time was expressed with even greater vigour, writing to his wife on 20 Dec. 1792,

been obliged to act as a sort of head of a party, much in the same way, as some Colonel or Serjeant may now be doing with the remains of Dumouriez's army. This however can last only for a short time : it may serve to keep us together for a while ; but if the D. cannot be prevailed upon to return to his station, of which I see at present no prospect, and hardly indeed the opportunity, we must dwindle away and be dispersed in various channels till the very name and idea of the party will be lost. The credit and consequence that has been lost by this conduct, first of F. and then of the D. is dreadful to think of. Had F. determined to have taken part with us, at the close of last year ; had he disclaimed the Fr[iends] of the People, and sided with those who had certainly the best claim to be considered as his friends, there is hardly a doubt, that He might at this time, have been minister. Had he even taken part with us at the beginning of this sessions there is little doubt, though more than before, that his authority in the country might have been equally or nearly as great. As it is, He has put himself in a situation in which as far as can be foreseen nothing less than a Revolution can ever make him Minister. The D. of P. upon a smaller scale has judged equally wrong, and with consequences equally injurious. By this attempt of continuing to act with F., while they differed on questions such as those now depending, He has disappointed the expectations of his friends and of the publick, and lost much of that reputation for firmness and decision, which is so necessary to the head of a party, and may be so wanted hereafter for the purpose of recovering F. The opinion that the D. had a will and a judgement of his own, and could firmly act up to that judgement, would be the best cure for that distrust, which otherwise may for ever exclude F. from Office. The situation of the D. was, I confess, difficult. To have taken the course which I recommended would undoubtedly have changed what was one party into two, with each its head and members and separate functions ; acting without enmity to each other, but moving in different directions, and forming each its own system. But the course which is

says that "Windham stands higher at present, both in the House and in the country than any man I remember." After this it seems an anti-climax to add, as he does, that "I think he might have a cabinet office if he liked."

now taken leaves no party at all. The only body that lives and acts is an heterogeneous mass, formed hardly in any degree of the materials of the D. of P.'s friends, (though it has derived from them its life and energy) and pursuing habits and instincts altogether its own. It is a little gilded and venomous insect, with great force of wing, which has sprung from the carcase of the old party, which it leaves to moulder and grow putrid in the Eyes of the publick. If I were a man of Ambition and activity, and talents for such a situation, now is the time when I might become a great leader, all the world being ready to hail the course I have taken, and which I laboured with most earnest endeavours to make the course also of the D. of P. I have no such dispositions, did I possess even the powers, so that the party seems to be melting away, with no one growing up to replace it, but such as must derive all its strength and sentiment from the misfortunes and mischiefs of the country.

This is the best picture which I can give you of the state of Internal Politicks as confined to publick men. The evils of this I feel less acutely, from the consideration of the promising appearance which things seem to assume upon the Continent, where the progress of the mischief is at least stopt, with as good hopes of further reduction of it, as can be entertained in a business of such extent and complexity.—The representation which you made of the state of opinions in the Southern parts of France, combined with other accounts, confirming the same ideas, makes a very considerable part of the hopes which I allow myself to indulge. You will have heard all the accounts which we have as yet got of the complete success of the Austrian arms in Brabant, such as give full assurance for the security of Holland, and leave little or no doubt of the entire evacuation of Flanders. We know as yet for certain (March 27th) only of the victory of the 18th¹. There are accounts seemingly pretty authentick of a continuation of the same successes, amounting to nearly an entire dispersion of the whole of the French Army.

What we want now is a naval force in the Mediterranean such as might give heart and protection to the sentiment which you describe as existing in that part of France. Similar aid is wanting

¹ Defeat of Dumouriez at Neerwinden, followed by the evacuation of Belgium.

towards Brittany, where as you will see by the French papers a very general dissatisfaction prevails. In both these cases indeed there must be a land force to cooperate with that by sea; and such I conclude in the course of the summer must be found. At all events an English fleet should be, or rather should have been, in the Mediterranean, to give that succour and protection, which I conceive all the countries upon those shores are looking for at our hands, and which it would be a proud distinction in us to grant. I long to think that Rome, our common mother, should owe her safety, if danger must approach her, to the protecting justice of Great Britain.

Amidst so much said of our political differences it may be necessary to state in what degree they affect private and individual intercourse. You may imagine that those who lived together chiefly as Politicians do not continue much to do so when their Politicks disagree. The secession likewise from the Whig Club, of which you may have seen an account in the papers, has been a subject of greater complaint than any difference in voting or speaking. But none of these have led in my case to any change of manner in private, nor in my own mind to any change of private regard. I retain all my former opinions and kindness for F., though I see with regret, that his sentiments and wishes, on the changes now going on in the world, are more remote from mine than I had formerly supposed. The list of the persons who side with him on these points, you know pretty well by the list of the Division. Those who do not appear there may be presumed in general to be on the other side. Of persons not in Parliamt, and whose opinions you would feel interested about, I am happy to tell you that Fullarton¹ approves entirely of what I have done; as He informed me some time since in a letter, for which I must take care that He does not hear of my acknowledgements from you, before He gets them from myself. In the same letter, which He wrote from Scotland, He inquires whether I have heard [from]² you.

It is no small satisfaction to me likewise to find that Pelham

¹ Col. William Fullarton, whose distinguished service in India is not so well remembered as his later quarrel with Major-General Picton in Trinidad.

² Paper torn.

thinks upon the whole in the same way. If you see him, you will perhaps tell him what I say in this respect, as well as on the other matters in this letter. I intend indeed to write to him.

Matters of private news, not connected with publick, I don't undertake for; and there is but little encouragement, when the Principal that I know is of a sort so dreadfully melancholy, as the death of Lady Herbert¹, which happened the other day, about three weeks after her lying in, and when, though she had been in danger, hopes were, I believe, entertained of her recovery. An article of a different sort, though not a compensation for the other, is the marriage that is to take place soon, between Lady Charlotte Bentinck, and Charles Greville². It is a love match conceived long since, and in which all parties seem to have acted so well as to make it rather a matter of regret, so far as her fortune must be sacrificed to her happiness, than of blame in any quarter. If any one is to be blamed, it seems to be the Duchess, who placed in the way of a young woman so retired as Lady Charlotte a man having qualities so likely to recommend him to her regard as Charles Greville. The very name might be sufficient to turn the heads of half a boarding school.

Today I go to the House to debate this Treason bill. Tomorrow I mean to set out for the recess to Norfolk. I could not have gone in peace, if I had not thanked you for your letters, including that which contained the Pope's representation. And begging all kind remembrances and wishes to M^{rs} H. and your party,

Farewell, let me hear often,

W. W.³

¹ Elizabeth, daughter of Topham Beauclerk, married in 1787 George Augustus, Lord Herbert, afterwards 11th Earl of Pembroke.

² The first child of the marriage was Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville, the diarist. Elliot thought the elder Charles Greville "a very disagreeable coxcomb, with very little merit to recommend him excepting his face."

³ (Endorsed):—"Having shewed this letter to L^d Minto, he spoke of it to M^r Windham, who desired to read it and assented to Lord Minto's request to have a copy of it. It remained in M^r Windham's possession till his death, and I have since received it from M^{rs} Windham. J. C. Hippisley. Jan. 20, 1812."

From the foregoing letter, taken in conjunction with those in Elliot's *Life* and the letters of Portland and Spencer which will be given under the latter part of this year and beginning of the next, the relations of the Windhamites among themselves will appear fairly clear. What is not quite so easy to make out is Windham's relation to the ministry. As early as the beginning of March 1793 Burke, Windham and Elliot desired a conference with Pitt on the subject of the war, and had a long interview with Pitt and Dundas which was "more like a cabinet" than any council which Elliot had ever attended¹. Actual overtures for incorporation in the ministry, as we gather from the *Diary*, began in the middle of June, but their precise nature is not set forth at large. The fourteenth of June is noted in the *Diary* as "the day of my receiving the first note from Pitt, just as I was setting out to Wycombe. It was the next day, Saturday, that I must have gone there." The invitation to this meeting was as follows.

PITT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 7.)

DOWNING ST.,

FRIDAY, *June 14th*, 1793.

Mr Pitt presents his compliments to Mr Windham, and wishes much, if Mr Windham will give him leave, to have some conversation with him before Monday on the subject of the Motion of which Mr Fox has given Notice for that day. It would also be a great satisfaction to Mr Pitt to have an Opportunity, if it is not disagreeable to Mr Windham, of stating confidentially to him some circumstances arising out of the present state of Politics, and which Mr Pitt rather wishes to communicate Personally to himself than thro' any other Channel. It is hardly necessary to add that if Mr Windham has the Goodness to comply with Mr Pitt's wishes in this respect, any thing which may pass will not transpire any where, without Mr Windham's

¹ *Life and Letters of Lord Minto*, II. p. 121. Burke and Elliot also conferred with ministers on the Traitorous Correspondence Bill on 25 March, but Windham, though expected, did not come. On 3 May was founded a political dining-club including Lord Malmesbury, Lord Beauchamp, Lord Porchester, Burke, Windham and Elliot.

particular Permission. Mr Pitt will be at Leisure any hour either tomorrow or Sunday, at which Mr Windham would find it convenient to call in Downing Street.

On the 17th Windham "saw Pitt; finished Mudge¹; and made speech (a singularly bad one) on Fox's motion². Went home and supped with Burke." On 18 June "Lord Spencer, I think, called in the morning and declared against acceptance. Certainly felt it as a great load off my mind. My *feel*, both before and after, a sufficient proof of the state of my mind with respect to a real liking of the object. Lord Spencer went out of town in the evening." On 19 June "Interview with Pitt³ to give my answer: not wholly satisfied with my own statements, they were at least much inferior to his." From Elliot we learn that the overtures included the offer to Windham of an eventual Secretaryship of State, although "there were great difficulties in changing in the present circumstances, in the midst of a war the correspondence of which was conducted through that office," and to Spencer of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. That the impression gathered by Pitt and Dundas, and regarded by them as "perfectly satisfactory" was that Windham's "mind was made up to think it must come to his accepting office, but that it might be better some time hence," and that Lord Spencer's refusal of Ireland, "on private grounds of family convenience," was also no bar to a future arrangement. To Elliot himself was held out first the government of Madras, which he refused; then, but less definitely, the office, eventually given to Windham, of Secretary at War, with a seat in the cabinet, and lastly the Irish Secretaryship. His adverse views of the last-named office we have already had occasion to notice.

In the interval between these negotiations and the date of the following letter, Windham carried out, in the company of Col. Fullar-

¹ Report on the claim of Thomas Mudge to rewards for improvements in chronometers. Possibly Pitt's conversation related in part to this topic.

² For an address in favour of peace with France. Windham and Burke both spoke.

³ The note making this appointment is in Add. MS. 37844, but is not worth reproduction.

ton, a project originally conceived by Elliot and himself earlier in the year, of a visit to the army in Flanders. He left England on the tenth of July, was present under a fairly hot fire at some work in the trenches and saw the surrender of Valenciennes, but characteristically tormented himself afterwards with regrets because he had, very wisely, refrained from exposing himself to useless danger in accompanying an attack on a covered way. He returned to England on 6 August.

Whether Pitt had any hand in advising this journey does not appear, but it seems not impossible that the result of it, upon Windham's peculiar type of mind, was to stimulate his inclination towards active participation in the measures taken by Government against the French, and the part which he played as war^{wn} official intermediary between the Government and the Emigrés served to strengthen this inclination. A stronger stimulus however was probably supplied by the example and precept of Sir Gilbert, who accepted, early in August, a commission from the ministry to go to Dunkirk, in the event of its surrender, to provide for the administration of the occupied territory. When the raising of the siege at the beginning of September caused this scheme to fall through, Elliot's destination, as we shall see, was at once changed to Toulon.

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37852, f. 212.)

MINTO,

4th Aug^r. 1793.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

I cannot tell you how much I am obliged to you for your letter, nor how much pleasure it has given me. I am extremely glad that you was present at the catastrophe and that your specimen of military life has thus been complete in all its parts. I enjoy as highly as it is possible to enjoy, *per alium*, all the pleasure and all the sorts of pleasure, which this expedition has given you. I need not tell you that I should have liked to be there, nor that my relish of the thing would have been amazingly heighten'd by a participation in it with you. But there is nothing like envy in my regret for this

loss ; for on the contrary the enjoyment you have had in it is not only agreeable to me in itself, but is a sort of compensation to me for my own absence. Your way of seeing and enjoying such things, I am willing to flatter myself, is so much *akin* to my own, that I feel as if it was gone in the *family*, though it did not fall to my own share. I am exceedingly gratified indeed by your understanding so justly the sort and degree of interest I take in *all* that concerns you, not only in your welfare, in your fame, in your interests, but even in your own feelings about yourself. I am so highly delighted in the unlimited confidence you are willing to place in me, of which you could offer no proof more perfect than your readiness to have told me faithfully your feelings in the trenches, even if they had been different from what they proved. If they had been of the other sort and you had told me so, I should have given you credit for courage, not less in degree, and of a much higher kind, than that which no man could doubt in you but yourself, even without the experiment. For as the mind is superior to matter, so is magnanimity, or the valour of the mind, to that of the nerves. But I am still better pleased to know that you have both. I know that you resolve almost all questions of conduct, small as well as great, into questions of *duty*; and if you sometimes hesitate when others see no room for doubt, it is in a great degree because you are more anxious to be right, and the chance of being wrong is more uneasy to you than to almost any man I have ever known. I honour this principle too highly to quarrel even with any little *Error* in the *going of the machine* that may be incident to it. My indulgence is indeed the cheaper, as I cannot refuse myself the justice to *claim kindred* with you here also. But I have thought of a compensation piece, or rather a balance¹, to steady these little fluctuations, and to render the motion more uniform, which I dedicate to you as a Patron of such improvements, hoping to give no offence to Sir George Shuckborough or the Astronomer Royal. The invention has this presumption in its favour, that it is perfectly simple. It is only a certain degree of *hardiness* in acting on what appears to be right on *Balance*. Suppose a scale of Right in which 20 is the highest number. Take then an alterna-

¹ The metaphors are suggested by Windham's work on the Mudge committee.

tive to decide on, of which one side shall stand in the scale at 10—the other at 9—I say act on 10 as firmly as if 9 did not exist. You will say the hesitation is occasion'd by the difficulty of observing correctly at what number each side stands;—not by want of firmness afterwards. I am not sure of this. Hesitation is often occasioned by what you say, and then it is right; but there is also in many cases a subsequent hesitation, and fluctuation, as if the two sides of the question were pulling, not uniformly and constantly one ag^t the other, so that the strongest should be sure of prevailing, but separately, and alternately, so that though the strongest pulls *furthest* at each pull, yet in the interval of its action, the weaker pulls back again, and great part of the work must be perpetually repeated, and then the question is determined not by who pulls strongest but who pulls last. When I mention'd your anxiety to be right I did not mean to talk of any *error*, on the contrary it is to this excellent part of your character that a great proportion of the homage which the whole world is paying you ought to be ascribed; and amongst the rest, it is to this virtuous principle that for one I profess to give the *very* high esteem which you know I have for you, although I beg you to remember that I claim friendship and affection with you on many other grounds of private endearment and early habits. I mention'd your anxiety on these points, only to say that I enter entirely into it on this occasion; and am therefore very happy to give you my clear suffrage both for what you have done, and what you have omitted. You was certainly right to visit the Trenches. You would have *certainly* been most exceedingly culpable for mounting a breach, or otherwise exposing your life to considerable, and, in your case, wholly gratuitous, and *impertinent* hazard. If others did so, in my opinion they were wrong; but no two cases are alike on this question, and taking all circumstances into the account, Publick and private, it would have been more blameable in you than any Englishman, or perhaps any other man alive.—It is now time to talk to you of something else, not less important perhaps than the scene you have left, tho' less splendid and animating. But it is the proper sphere of your action; and one in which you are not a spectator, but called by God who gave you the means, by the world which wants the use of

them, by yourself and friends, towards both of whom you have an account to render, to perform a principal part. I seem to be threatening you with the subject *at large*; but altho' I wish to do so, and I know I could find no time more favourable than when you are just returned from witnessing great exertions in the same common cause, and must therefore be the more impressed with the duty and desire to *be doing* yourself, and to take your share in these great concerns of the world, yet I must for want of time confine myself to one part of the subject which does not admit of delay.

I left London the day before you. On my arrival here I reflected on what had passed between us concerning Lord Spencer and the possibility of his acceptance. This was not known to Ministers, who thought on the contrary the thing *over*. They might therefore take such steps towards another arrangement, or might *fix* some much worse choice. Thinking as I do, that Lord Spencer's filling that most important and critical station is of real and urgent consequence to that country, to this country, and considering the *sort* of danger to be apprehended from thence, to the rest of the world, I judged it absolutely necessary to let Dundas know the *possibility* of his going to Ireland. I did so by letter, but with every sort of caution which could prevent Lord Spencer from being *committed*. I desired Mr D. to wait for your return before any step should be taken towards renewing the proposition to Lord Spencer. He promises to do so, in his answer, but presses me to lose no time after your arrival, in getting you to bring the subject forward. If you receive this letter in Town you had much better see Pitt, or Dundas, on the subject immediately. If not you will I am sure feel the importance of the matter sufficiently to use such means as occur to you with L^d S. *instantly*. The Irish arrangement stands entirely still on this account, and Gov^t is naturally, I believe, impatient to settle it. I rec^d your letter this morning and have time for no more. I presume you will be in England before this letter reaches London. L^y Malmesbury is here on her way to Kinnaird, Sir David Carnegie's. L^y Elliot sends you her kindest comp^t and is happy to hear that your tour has given you so much satisfaction, but she *will not* repent of my having resisted the same temptation.

I hope when you answer this to hear that your health has not suffer'd, and that you have recovered the extraordinary fatigue you have been exposed to.

Do not delay the Irish business; but if you have leisure, pray write your present thoughts and intentions on what relates to your own situation. The enemies of all good, as you so well call them, seem to have hopes from Ireland. Your stout co-operation in England will be wanted, and I confess I look forward with comfort to the prospect of acting in concert with you, tho' on a different stage; possibly of corresponding directly with you on this great work.

Believe me ever, My dear Windham,

Most affectionately yours

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Lord Spencer need not, and I think should not, know of my letter to Dundas.

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37852, f. 216.)

MINTO,

13th Aug^t 1793.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

Not having heard from you I presume you are taking steps with Lord Spencer, and that you will not write till you can tell me the result. I am so far off that a great delay will be occasion'd by making me the medium of your communication with Dundas on this subject; and as I advised you to go directly to him, I have now advised him to see or write to you on the subject. I thought it right to let you know, however, that I have done so. The more I hear of Ireland the more important I think L^d Spencer's mission, and the more anxious I am for his acceptance of it.

You know, or if not, I tell you in confidence that Lord Malmesbury is extremely desirous of *Ireland*. I shall speak to *you* quite frankly on the subject. Lord Spencer's character and name is *of the*

sort that is wanted there, and being united with understanding and Talents, I consider him as precisely what the occasion calls for, and cannot help feeling that the country has a strong *claim* to his services. If it should happen however that they cannot be obtained, and he is put out of the question, not knowing any other person of *the same description* on whom the choice can fall, I presume it will be made on a different principle, and they will either fix on some *friend* of a *negative* quality; or employ some able man of business. The latter would be the better principle, provided *character* is not *too much* forgot in the choice. Looking through the Peerage, I believe impartially that they will find none so well qualified by ability, official habits, and the great talent of knowing and conciliating men, as Lord Malmesbury. The entire cordiality and confidence between him and me would undoubtedly be another very favourable and useful point, and if there may be supposed any difference between his general views and mine of Publick Principles and dutys, I will venture to say that in the sort of business which belongs to that office, he will be more likely to approach to me, than to draw me after him. In a word, after L^d Spencer I should prefer him, and I am perswaded he is amongst the best, if not the best qualified. I feel however the impossibility of my suggesting either him or any other. I mention all this to you, both for the sake of saying *everything* to you which I think, and also that if you should happen to agree with me and an opportunity should occur in which that opinion might drop from you, it might not be lost. I pledge my *Faith* and *Honour* to you in the meanwhile that L^d Malmesbury shall never know of his name having been mention'd to you unless it should hereafter prove agreeable to you; so you can feel yourself under no embarrassment of delicacy on this subject. I long to have Valenciennes in detail from you; but that will not be tomorrow.

Believe me ever, My Dear Windham,

Your most affectionate

GILBERT ELLIOT.

Minto—Hawick by *Carlisle*.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iv. 132.)

BECONSFIELD,

Aug. 18, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is with no small affliction I find that what I feared as probable is at length become certain, and that, after fluctuating a long time without any system, we have adopted one that, in my opinion, is completely ruinous. I know very well that it may be defended on many plausible topics and principles. All routine, both political and military, is in its favour. It is not, however, the better for that; because neither the present politics, nor the present war, are war and politics of routine. France is strong at arm's length. She is, I am convinced, weakness itself, if you can get to grapple with her internally. If you keep on the frontier—if you should even gain all the frontier—she may, if you are resolved to give her time, (which is giving her everything,) make another frontier; it is indeed nearly ready made.

As to getting Dunkirk, it is getting nothing at all. It is a retrograde proceeding. But I shall trouble myself no more in a business, in which I can do little or nothing more than give uneasiness to myself and others. Three things are requisite, all subject to great uncertainty, to make this plan produce any of the effects *we* wish from it:—First, That this Nation will be satisfied to continue the war for another year, when it is evident no real impression is made on the body of the French system:—Second, That the allies will hold together:—Third, That they all will, a year hence, mean the ruin of the system in France. All these must happen to make this scheme of war answer any other than the end of a defensive; in the present state of things, with regard to France, the most absurd of all imaginations. If no other is possible we must submit.

I remember in the last war, at the taking of St Eustatius, the most general illumination in my memory. Now! It looks as if the ministers were afraid of the people's growing too fond of their measures. This American is an ugly and thorny affair. It was in

time of war, I was always of opinion, we should feel the loss of the Colonies.

I am very sorry we cannot see you,—but I do not know whether we are to regret it either. The efforts of the enemy in your counties ought to be resisted.

Ever most truly and affectionately yours

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 23.)

BECONSFIELD,

Aug. 20, 1793.

MY D^R SIR,

You may easily believe that your letter of yesterday (which I received before I went to bed last night) did not tend to set my mind much at ease, except with regard to the few words you say of Pelham. It is very material that a man of his importance by all titles should be quite right. There is but one point of view in which this strange proceeding with regard to Dunkirk can give one any comfort: That however is not very probable. There is some resemblance between great absurdity and deep design. To be sure the road from *Crèvecoeur* (to which the D. of York advanced in order to retreat) is within a trifle as near to Paris as to Dunkirk; and, if Cambray were taken, is as little liable to molestation from any strong places of the Enemy or rather less so. But I shall say something more upon this subject by and by. For a great deal depends on it.

M^{RS} Crewe¹ is here, and very busy on a Charitable Scheme. I wish her success. She stays here tomorrow. Can you come?

My d^r S^r, ever aff^{ly} y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

¹ Frances Anne, wife of John Crewe, afterwards 1st Baron Crewe, and the subject of the famous Whig toast, "True Blue and Mrs Crewe."

M^{rs} Burke and I dined at Lord Grenville's yesterday. Pitt dined there on his way to Somersetshire. Not one word of Politicks. They did not open, and I did not press.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iv. 134.)

August 23, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very happy in this advantage, though, with you, I wish it had been less dearly bought. Since this unfortunate object of Dunkirk is chosen, it is of the last importance that we should not add to the disgrace of a bad choice, that of an unfortunate execution. This stroke, I must take it for granted, was necessary for our advancing to Dunkirk. It looks as if neither we, nor the Dutch, were sufficiently apprised of the real force of the enemy.

What a dreadful affair is this of St Domingo. In horror with regard to the act, and as a cause of indignation against the actors, it exceeds the late massacre of Paris. The systematic plan of extermination the Jacobins have pursued in that fine island, and which they intended for every other island, seems to me to form the top of the climax of their wickedness. Their partisans here affect to shudder if twenty men are killed in a skirmish, and yet they are enthusiasts in favour of those who have reduced sedition, assassination, general robbery, general massacre and general combustion, into a sort of regular art and a sort of morality. Every day we live will convince thinking men, that there are evils to which the calamities of war are blessings. Well! we have done very properly in a vigorous opposition to Jacobinism under the plausible disguise of peace. Had it gone on, in my opinion, the burning down of half of London, after the massacre of half its inhabitants, would have been a cheap composition for the whole kingdom. I do not flatter myself, that the English branch of the Jacobin family is a jot better than the French. If it were fifty per cent. better, I should still think it a most abominable thing. We must continue to be vigorous *alarmists*. M^r Coke's conduct shows to what the spirit of faction may carry a

man. But these rich men must not be suffered to be a prey to their own folly and madness. I trust in God, that some will be found who will provide better for their safety than they do themselves. These squirrels are charmed by the rattlesnake, and would jump into his mouth. Save your neighbour. *Cape saxa manu, cape robora pastor, etc. etc*¹. They ask what they are to *get* by this war? Why! the wretches, they get their existence,—they get the power of playing the fool with impunity by it,—and is that nothing?

God bless you, and many thanks. We have got the turtle, and thank M^{rs} Lukin.

Ever faithfully yours,

EDM. BURKE.

WINDHAM TO DUKE OF PORTLAND.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 13.)

FELBRIGG,

Sept. 3rd, 1793.

MY DEAR LORD,

I was more unfortunate than your Grace can conceive in missing the pleasure of seeing you at my return from the Continent. Lord William had told me so confidently, that you would certainly be at Welbeck, that I was careless about inquiring the first day of my arrival; and the day afterwards, I think, had the mortification of finding that, if I *had* inquired, I should have been in time.

Among my reasons of regret on this occasion is the missing an opportunity of talking to your Grace on subjects which however little pleasant to me, I am sure, and probably even to your Grace, are not for that reason less necessary to be considered. I fear the return of such questions as that which I mentioned to your Grace at the close of the last Session: which, though laid asleep for the present, will probably be brought up again: and I wish to put myself in as good a state as I can for forming a firm and satisfactory judgment upon them. The situation, beyond all comparison, most agreeable to me would be that of a mere member of Parliament,

¹ Virgil, *Georg.* III. 420.

maintaining from time to time my own opinion in debate, and giving to Ministry, in a cause which I approved, the benefit of a support, which would become of some value from its total exemption from the suspicion of any undue motive. The thought of any closer connection is one from which I shrink with perfect dread; yet I am far from being convinced that it may not be necessary; and for that reason am anxious to be provided as much as possible with the opinions and views of those, to whose judgements I am accustomed to look up, and with a view to whose conduct I should wish to regulate my own.

It is plain that the plan of those who are friendly in different degrees to the French system, is to endeavour to rescue it from final overthrow by rendering the war unpopular here, and thus to destroy the confederacy which at present threatens it and which, when once dissolved, is never likely to be again united. If this plan succeeds, there is an end, in my opinion, to all hopes of maintaining the constitution of this country, or of preserving anything like regular and orderly government in any country in Europe. Should it even fail, I do not conceive it will fail so completely, or the success of the opposite system be so entire, as not to leave Europe exposed for a series of years to the danger which now threatens it, and not to require all the exertions which wise and well-intentioned men can use, to keep down the operation of opposite principles. The differences therefore that now separate people in their political conduct are not only of the most important kind, but likely, as I conceive, to be of very long continuance. To me it seems that the world in my time is not likely to be in [a] state in which, with such opinions as I conceive Fox to have, and with such persons as He will probably be for ever connected with, I could wish to see him Minister of this country. The only choice, therefore, that will be left to me and others who are of that opinion, will be either to remain a third body, or rather a third independent collection of individuals, supporting Ministry but not joining them; or to incorporate ourselves, at some period, and in some circumstances, with those to whom, as party-men, we have hitherto been opposed. This question, on which there is probably much diversity of opinion, among those

even who admit it to be the only one remaining, and on which much may be said on both sides, might safely perhaps be deferred and left to the decision of future circumstances, if it was not for that part which involves the consideration of Ireland. The situation of Ireland is so important and so critical, that it forms an epoch by itself and may be a reason for anticipating a decision, which otherwise it might be very desirable to keep for some time in suspense.

The views which open on this occasion, if Ministry are fairly desirous on their part of establishing a government on a firm and Constitutional basis and restoring to the Aristocracy of the country the influence which they have so much contributed to strip it of, and if it is thought on the other, that such a union ought to take place, would be of course, that some person of proper consideration should go to Ireland, while a corresponding weight, sufficient to ensure an honourable support, should be placed in the Cabinet here. Persons proper for all those stations are certainly not wanting, nor would an arrangement for their admission seem to be difficult, supposing Ministry to have a real view to the Interests of the country, and not to be seeking merely to break and disunite those, who might in future be opposed to them. The wishes of ministry have hitherto seemed to point only to L^d Spencer; but if the grounds, on which this wish has been formed, have been good, it would apply not more to him than to others of similar description, could they be induced to take that situation. At all events L^d Spencer would hardly be induced to place himself there, nor could well indeed be advised to do so, without a better assurance of support at home, than there appears at present the means of forming. If Ministers are not sincere or not honest in their views,—an opinion which I should have no particular difficulty in admitting—nothing remains but to continue the course which one is at present pursuing: but if the fact be otherwise, and that they are really desirous, though for purposes of their own, of forming an administration on its true bottom, it is a matter certainly to be well considered, whether such a disposition ought to be frustrated and an opportunity lost which may never again return with equal advantage to the country.

I am sure I am as impartial upon this subject as a person can

well be, as impartial at least, if I may make a good bull, on one side : for there is really nothing, that I dread so much, as the necessity of taking any part in a measure which I seem to be recommending; though I have brought myself to the state of being ready to do whatever should be necessary, I am very far from having prepared myself equally in point of inclination. My likings are all the other way, and are yielded only to arguments which I don't know well how to resist.

If Welbeck were not so distant, or my desire so strong of enjoying for some time a state of perfect retirement, I should like to wait upon your Grace and talk over these matters more fully than can be done by letter. Your Grace, however, may be as well satisfied not to hear of them; and it may be necessary rather to apologise, for having said so much, than to regret the want of an opportunity of saying more. At all events I will desist here. It would have been pleasant to me to have seen your Grace when I came fresh from seeing Lord William; and to have told you how much his character appears to advantage, as it is more and more discovered. Though such testimonials you must have had from many other persons, I am happy to add mine to the number. The Duchess I hope is well. Let me beg your Grace to believe me ever

Your most obedient and faithful Humble servant

W. WINDHAM.

EARL SPENCER TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 112.)

OXFORD,

Sep. 14, 1793.

DEAR WINDHAM,

I met with your Letter of the 12th here on my way back to Althorp from Hampshire, and having a leisure quarter of an hour before bed time avail myself of it to thank you. I confess I expected pretty much that the Person¹ whose opinion you speak of in it would

¹ The Duke of Portland?

entertain those sentiments, and perhaps, though I entirely agree with you in not having the least hope of a Reunion with the Quarter alluded to, they are such as I cannot be surprised at or altogether disapprove, considering all circumstances; for that Person, having always professed so strong a diffidence of those in power, has surely no great reason for wishing a connection with them from anything that has happened very lately, and on the contrary may probably be less inclined to it, from what must at least to him have appeared in the Light of Endeavours to detach from him as many as possible of those of his friends whose sentiments are the most like his own, and who were the persons most likely to have co-operated with him in support of those sentiments. I agree with you in being decidedly of Opinion that I could not go the least out of my way upon a hope of Reunion with the other Gentleman¹, whose opinions, if they are really such as his late conduct would lead one to infer, are such as I should be extremely sorry to give any countenance to. The other part of your intelligence may possibly be true, and if it is, will (as it appears to me) circumscribe the Part we have to take within very narrow Limits indeed, as it will put it out of our power to think of any other than an *unconnected* support of Governm^t, while at the same Time the State of affairs will probably call for a support the most decided.

Since you wrote, your opinion upon the Dunkirk Expedition will not have been rendered more favourable, though I am in hopes, by the News of today's Papers, that it is not so bad as we had great reason to apprehend; but if the Plan was a bad one, the Execution of it does not appear to have made amends for the Error, and I am afraid that all those who wish to defend the Continuation of the War, will be a little put to it to give a good Account of the Conduct of it. I have not heard since from the Army, and I conclude that my correspondent either does not like to write unpleasant Accounts, or that he has lately been too much upon Duty to have an opportunity of writing. The Accounts from Toulon² seem to be confirmed in

¹ Fox?

² Occupied by Lord Hood, in concert with the Royalists there, 29 Aug. 1793. It was rendered untenable in November by Bonaparte's skilful disposition of his artillery, and was abandoned, after the arsenal and ships had been burnt, on 19 Dec. following.

the Papers of today, with so many particulars that I hope we shall find them true, but I don't quite understand what is to be done about it, as I have no idea of L^d Hood's having land force sufficient to defend the Place, and the Manner in which it seems to have been taken would, I should think, scarce permit of his making the sort of use of the capture that an Englishman could wish, that is to take possession of, or destroy, their ships and naval stores there. I hope however his Lordship will send a more distinct and intelligible account of his Transactions than your friend Sir James Murray¹ does, who I really think improves in obscurity and mysteriousness every dispatch he writes. I am very glad you have not yet sent me back C. Fitzroy's Letter, as it will be another opportunity for you to write something with it, and now I have drawn you into a correspondence, I shall be very unwilling, I assure you, to lose any occasion of encouraging you to the continuance of it.

I was in Town for a day last Saturday, and I saw Sir Gilb^t Elliott in the Street; I was in a great Hurry at the Time, or I should have stopt to speak with him; what can have brought him up from Scotland so soon?²

I hear that Parl^t is to meet on the 29th of October; I hope I shall be able to see you before that time, and shall be glad to know whether you are to be at Felbrigge about the 6th of that month, because I am not quite sure whether I could not then contrive to call on you for a day.

Yours very faithfully

SPENCER.

¹ Afterwards Murray-Pulteney, 7th Baronet, Adjutant to the Duke of York in Flanders.

² He had come up in connexion with the Dunkirk scheme, but a few days later (17 Sept.) his destination was altered to Toulon. In his letter of the 18th announcing this to Windham he adds the hope that "as the gruel thickens, or to speak without metaphor, as the danger of the world increases, you will come to think action the first duty and responsibility pretty nearly a point of honour." He started on 18 Oct. and landed at Toulon 19 Nov.

EARL SPENCER TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 114.)

ST ALBANS,

Sep. 18, 1793.

DEAR WINDHAM,

I sit down to write to you without having very well considered in my own Mind what I am to write, but having a little leisure cannot avoid communicating the apprehensions I have been forced into from observing the very awkward predicament in which we seem to have got, the difficulties of which appear to increase and grow more complicated every day. I was this morning for a few hours in London, where dissatisfaction and dejection seemed to me very apparent in the face and language of every one I happened to meet with. The late total failure of the Dunkirk scheme has been a great cause of this and the very censureable neglect or mismanagement or perhaps both together so conspicuous in the Admiralty has not a little added to it; it is currently reported that the Duke of Richmond has justified his own share of the business in a manner unanswerable, by producing the minutest and exactest detail of all the Orders received and executed in his department; the necessary consequence of his justification appears to be L^d Chatham's condemnation, and between them they have been the mean of crowning a rash and ill concerted plan with a lame and inefficient Execution. My chief reason for making all these reflections is that I foresee that we shall by and by, when these matters are, as they certainly will be, brought before the publick with all the exaggeration and aggravation that malice and ability can give them, find ourselves in a most distressing position, either obliged to defend what we cannot in conscience think defensible, or if we join in the clamour, which I very much fear will soon become a popular one, give strength to those whose strength will be the Ruin and Subversion of everything which we most wish to preserve. It will be too

much, I doubt, to expect from Mr Pitt, that he will have publick spirit enough to sacrifice his Brother if he is really to blame, and if he does not sacrifice him, I shall be almost afraid in the present circumstances of his falling himself; but if he does fall, where are we to look to supply his place? Only to those who would (if they are in truth acting upon principle) plunge us into a System, which would lead, for aught I know, to all the Horrors and Miseries of France: for as to looking for any third Party, of strength and weight enough to make head against the joint Abilities of Pitt and Fox with all their respective supports and appendages, it would, I think, in the present state of the Country, be perfectly chimerical. To set against all the bad part of our Prospect, I see nothing but Toulon, and there is something about that which I am a little at a loss whether to be satisfied with or no; I have always had a great aversion to engaging in defence of any particular System of French Politicks, and L^d Hood's declarations are directly and absolutely in favour of the Constitution of 1789, which Constitution, if we are to trust to Burke, whose predictions have been verified by Experience, contained in it the seeds of all the bitter fruit that followed. How do we know that if all France, or at least a great majority of the country, were to declare themselves for that Constitution and it should in consequence be established and sworn to as it was in 1789, how do we know that it might not tend like the former one to the very same confusion and excesses which the ill-contrived balance of that Constitution gave rise to before? I own I am as much puzzled to determine in my own Mind whether to be glad or sorry for the Capture of Toulon, circumstanced as it is, as ever I was in my Life; and I am much tempted to think that perhaps the best event of that undertaking for England would be that they should do something which might justify L^d Hood in destroying their Fleet and Arsenal there notwithstanding the Treaty. You see, my dear Windham, that I am taking a very great Liberty with you, by actually thinking upon Paper to you, for I am now writing, just as they occur to me, the crude Ideas that suggest themselves upon what I hear and read in the Newspapers. I should be happy if these Ideas of mine might draw from you some better conceived and better digested opinions, and lead you to point

out some plan of operation for us in the ensuing parliamentary Campaign, which we might pursue with Credit from the publick, with satisfaction to ourselves and with advantage to the Cause we wish to support.

Yours very sincerely

SPENCER.

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37852, f. 220.)

SPRING GARDENS,

2 Oct^r. 1793.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

I am still here, and do not expect to set out for Toulon before Thursday the 10th inst. I promised, not to you, but to myself, that I should write you a long letter, but have had my thoughts, as well as the whole of my time, forced another way, and now I flatter myself that I may yet have the pleasure of talking over with you, instead of writing, many things that appear to me extremely interesting. In this hope however, you may very well tell me that I perhaps reckon without my host, as it depends wholly on your doing what you may think it very unreasonable to expect, and what at this moment you have possibly no thoughts of—it is nothing less than your coming to Town. I will tell you very fairly, as I must do very shortly, that I really wish you extremely to come, and that the occasion is, I am persuaded, sufficiently grave to incur this sacrifice of your present comfortable leisure for a few days. It has got very much about that you are not only dissatisfied with some things that have passed during this campaign, but that you have expressed so indiscriminately that opinion, as to evince something like an intention of following it up in publick. The greatest possible uneasiness is entertain'd on that account by those, who may indeed have a sufficient personal interest in the question, but who also think

such a measure certain of producing the most fatal consequences to the common cause. It is the duty of a private as well as a publick friend to offer an opinion, if it is decided, on matters of real moment. Therefore, my dear Windham, excuse me; consider me as speaking still as one linked in Publick as well as private friendship with you, and not as already enter'd on my diplomattick functions, if I say that I most deliberately and entirely agree with them in thinking that what they apprehend would be fatal to the publick cause and interest. In one opinion you will I am sure agree with me, as soon as it is stated, viz. that not only a Publick and formal opposition in Parl^t on these grounds, but that *any* intimation of a strong opinion from *you* on that subject, is a *measure*, and cannot be classed as the casual conversation of indifferent men. If it is a *measure*, it should be taken on deliberation, and as a fair decision of your Judgment. For this reason it is that I wish you to come to Town—to enquire where your information may be authentick, and to deliberate with those with whom you are accustom'd to hold counsel what your conduct should be, or any result of your inquiries—Dundas knows I meant to write this letter, but he does not know what I say to you. I mention this only that I may not seem even to myself to avail myself of your kindness and of our friendship for the purposes of others, without telling you distinctly all circumstances. In truth I feel that this question is not only so very important for the Publick, but so full of *delicacy* with regard to yourself, that I have no hesitation in pressing you to come.—If you do come, I must hope on a thousand other grounds that it may be before I lose this last opportunity of embracing you, and carrying with me your advice and good wishes.—Believe me ever,

My dear Windham, Your most affectionate

GILBERT ELLIOT.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37852, f. 221^b.)

[2 Oct. 1793; written at the foot of Elliot's letter.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I do most heartily concur with our friend in every Idea he has upon the subject. God knows how much I feel the late disastrous events; which, bad as they are in some points, are all to be set to rights by Vigour and prudence. Let us endeavour to repair our ruins. Let us give a remedy to our sufferings. Let us correct our Errours—but in the name of the common Cause, let us not give advantage to those, who would turn occasional misfortunes into permanent calamities, and convert the mistakes committed on good principles into but too judicious means of promoting the worst. I most heartily wish to see you

and am most truly yours

EDM. BURKE.

Several allusions in Burke's letters in the latter part of this year refer to the recipient of the following letter. Mr (afterwards Sir John) Coxe Hippisley, whom we have already met with in this correspondence as the recipient of Windham's long letter of 28 March 1793, is perhaps best known from his having been at a later date the channel of negotiations whereby the last of the Stuarts became the recipient of a pension from George III. His activities in the years 1793—4 are fully described in a voluminous correspondence with Windham¹. They were partly directed towards obtaining assistance from the papal court for Lord Hood and Sir Gilbert Elliot in dealing with the problems which beset British administrators in the Mediterranean, especially after the fall of Toulon, and partly to a scheme for opening direct communication between the British government and the papacy.

¹ Add. MSS. 37848, 37849.

BURKE TO HIPPISELEY.

(Add. MS. 37848, f. 297, a copy¹.)

LONDON,

3 Oct^r. 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your kind remembrance ; and the value of the favour is much enhanced by what otherwise is a matter of sincere concern to me, I mean the ill state of your health when you honoured me with a letter from Rome.

Mr Windham is at his House at Fellbrigge. He takes at present but little part in public affairs, to which however the publick wish and opinion very loudly call him at this Crisis. The majority of the nation concurs with what I believe to be the desire of Ministry, that he should serve his Country in office as well as in Parliament.

As to what you have done with regard to the supply of his Majesties Fleet in the Mediterranean, there can be no doubt of its propriety. Tho' I trust we cannot now want a supply of any kind of provisions or stores, circumstances may happen to render the good disposition of the Government of the Country where you reside of great use to the general cause. Nobody can be so very squeamish as to refuse Benefits (nothing else will ever be offered by his Holiness) because they come from the Pope. He would be an Admiral, of perhaps wonderfull Theological Talents, but of not quite such splendid Military Qualities, who should scruple the receipt of these *Indulgences* called *Munitions de Guerre et de Bouche* from a prince-prelate that believes in Purgatory. I should not think a great deal better of a statesman at home, who from a disposition to Polemick Divinity, was so indifferently qualified for the conduct of any other kind of Warfare. But we have no such Admiral and no such Ministers.

I confess I would, if the matter rested with me, enter into much more distinct and avowed political connections with the Court of Rome than hitherto we have held. If we decline them, the Bigotry

¹ Marked by Hippiisley as "received from Lord Grenville, with a letter dated 29th October, at Rome, 20 Nov. 1793."

will be on our part and not on that of his Holiness: some mischief has happened, and much good has, I am convinced, been prevented, by our unnatural alienation. If the present state of the World has not taught us better things, our Errour is very much our fault. This good correspondance could not begin more auspiciously than in the person of the present Sovereign Pontiff, who unites the Royal and the sacerdotal Characters with advantage to both. He is indeed a Prelate whose dignity as a Prince takes nothing from his Humility as a Priest, and whose mild condescension as a Christian Bishop, far from impairing in him, exalts the awful and imposing authority of the secular Sovereign.

With regard to Monsignor Erskine¹, I am certain that all his designs are formed upon the most honorable and the most benevolent publick principles. I have a very high respect for his Talents and his Virtues. It is that respect which produces in my mind very serious doubts, whether it would be altogether prudent for him to appear in London, untill his presence is not only suffered, but desired, by the King's servants. Without this authority, any marks of attention paid to him would be only personal. It is impossible too, but that even these marks of attention paid to him should be the less important and the less worthy of him, on account of a publick character. When that character is owned it certainly adds to personal consideration: but when it is not recognised, it produces a contrary effect, and as certainly detracts something from what would be otherwise due to the Merits of the Individual. Monsignor and you will have the goodness to pardon me for offering my advice upon this subject. Your Judgment is far superior to mine. I have only the advantage of being on the spot, and consequently of knowing the mass of the Country with a little more accuracy than it is possible for you to do at Rome.

I have now to say a word or two upon a subject in your Letter equally serious. I am sorry, though not at all surprized, that you should have received so groundless a report of the state of Ireland

¹ Monsignor Charles Erskine was sent by the Pope to England with a view to the opening of unofficial communication with the British Government according to Hippisley's suggestions.

as to represent the Catholics there as in a state of revolt, or of some disposition towards it, so as to make an application to his Holiness or to any other person, abroad or at home, necessary or even expedient towards bringing that great and respectable part of his Majesty's subjects to a sense of their Duty to their King and Country. I am satisfied (indeed I know it) that no description of men in either Kingdom is, from affection and principles, more firmly and faithfully attached to the King's person and authority than the Catholics of Ireland. None but persons very inconsiderate, or very malevolent, could represent them in any other light to you or to any other person.

Let me add, that they foully wrong the Bishops and Clergy of that Communion in Ireland, who represent them as wanting any remonstrance to stimulate them to their duty in preaching Loyalty to the King and obedience to the Laws. I speak from knowledge, that far from being defective in that respect, perhaps they have gone beyond their strict duty, and weaken'd their influence by appearing to be more concerned for the support of Government than attentive to the sufferings of their people. Not one clergyman of that persuasion has been convicted, or I believe so much as suspected, of fomenting the late disturbances, or of being indifferent about them; some of them have been grievously hurt in their persons and in their poor property from riotous outrage; and their places of worship, which the Laws had opened, have been, in some parishes, shut up by the Lawless Multitude. These disorders (greater undoubtedly than any good man would wish them) have been, and I am afraid from not always the best Intentions, much exaggerated in the representation. The simple Truth is, that whatever their extent or violence might have been, these Tumults had no connexion with Religion or Politics. They had their origin in the establishment of the Militia in a new form. This form did in reality press hard on the poorer sort of people in certain particulars, and for that reason was considerably amended by Parliament, which seldom fails sooner or later to redress every Grievance, and to correct every Error into which by inadvertance it may fall. In part too the discontent arose,

as in such cases is not uncommon, from a misconception of the Intentions of the legislature in the formation of that new establishment. I remember very well that in the formation of a similar establishment in this Kingdom there were Tumults in many parts of the Country, and they were carried to as great an height as those which have lately disturbed the peace of Ireland. When the popular mind is inflamed upon any one subject it is usual to call to recollection and to blend with the original cause of uneasiness all other subjects of disquietude which had rankled more silently in the breasts of the people. But these matters of complaint were altogether of a Local and œconomical Nature. In these the Peasantry of the Country thought they had suffered some Grievances. On these complaints I am not called by any particular Duty to decide. The persons guilty of the disorders which have arisen on these grounds or pretexts have been punished. The spirit of Riot has been got under. If any real Grievance exists, I have no doubt that it will be redressed by the same competent authority by which the irregular mode of seeking relief has been punished. The Catholick clergy have nothing to do with the Business, and the less they meddle with it the better. As to the Laity of that Communion, they who represent their Conduct invidiously, and thereby produce an officious interference from abroad to quiet disorders, the principle of which is not properly stated, will be the very first to employ the circumstances of that interference, of which they are the cause, as a matter of new crimination against the Catholic Prelates, as introd[uc]ing the interposition of a foreign authority in the secular affairs of that Kingdom. Nothing, I am persuaded, is more remote from the Intention of the Ministers of the court of Rome. But the Clergy of Ireland ought to be aware of the Machinations of subtle and designing politicians, who have more than once laid Traps for their simplicity, into which with inconsiderate good intentions they have fallen headlong.

It is very true, that the late disorders, as almost all the disorders which for fifty years I remember, have happened chiefly among Catholics; and for a very plain reason. They are *popular* Tumults, and of course, must necessarily happen amongst those who form in

the far greater part of Ireland nineteen in twenty of the people of the lowest class. This has been produced by the steady and uniform, but, in my opinion, most injudicious operation of the Laws and policy of that Kingdom for near two hundred years past just to this time. This circumstance is not generally known, and it gives to malicious men an opportunity of attributing to the religion what belongs to the condition.

You have by some correspondent been led into an Errour. You are not to blame. On the contrary, your zeal, under the impression you have received, is much to be commended. I am quite certain, that the same sentiment of patriotism and benevolence, which led you to take the steps you have taken under your first impression, will induce you to show this Letter to the parties concerned. I hope it also from my confidence in your friendship. I hope at the same time you will be pleased to give them a cautionary information (not always superfluous to foreigners), that I speak with no other authority than may be supposed to attend the opinions of a private man of some experience and observation; and that my Character of a Member of parliament adds little or nothing to the weight of what I say. It is necessary that they should advert to our constitution. Members of Parliament, within their walls, and acting in their place, exercise (each his part of) a public function of the first importance; and therefore usually obtain an high degree of respect to their persons and character; But, what is not perhaps so generally known abroad, these are functions of a nature peculiar to our constitution, and do not resemble foreign official powers. Considered as effective voices in any matter of *State*, they are nothing more than any other of the King's Subjects. Liable to Legal Responsibility, the whole of our active government, without the exception of any part or province, is in the Ministers of the Crown; and strangers ought not to look upon anything as bearing the stamp of publick character from any but them. The rest is only the sentiment of private men, obtaining more or less weight from the reasons they give and the opinions entertained of their prudence.

I hope to hear better tidings of your health. Will Burke is perfectly sensible of your kind recollection of him and joins with

M^{rs} B. and my son in our best wishes for M^{rs} H. and Miss Stuart's health and happiness.

I am with sincere respect and regard,

My dear Sir, y^r most obedient and faithful humble ser^t

(signed) E. BURKE.

WINDHAM TO PITT.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 11.)

11 Oct., 1793.

SIR,

I believe the best way of communicating the contents of the inclosed letter from M^r Hippisley will be to send the letter itself. There is no abridgement of it, that I can make, that will save so much to your time and trouble, as it may chance to lose in the effect by not laying the subject so well before you. The matter really seems to be important, and to contain hints which it will be wholly unnecessary in me to recommend to your early consideration. I may take the liberty of mentioning that M^r Hippisley is a man of uncommon activity, of considerable address, of great zeal in the service either of his friends or of the Publick, by no means wanting in Judgement, and very advantageously circumstanced for promoting such subjects as his letter relates to. A sister of M^{rs} Hippisleys is married to a Roman nobleman, and several years ago M^r Hippisley had formed many acquaintance at Rome during the course of a year's residence there. In a private letter to me he has confessed his wishes, that in case of any acknowledgement made of these friendly dispositions in the Pope, or any message sent, as the foundation of future intercourse, He might be made the channel of communication. I simply lay the fact before you, leaving it to your discretion to act upon it, or not, as you shall see occasion. I most sincerely wish, that the views which he has opened may be found capable of being realised; so as not only to procure to us commercial advantages, but to place us in the situation of becoming the protectors of the Italian states, and

(odd as the idea may seem) the supporters, within certain limits, of the Papal power.

As the opportunity is presented to me, I cannot help offering my congratulations on the successes at Toulon, as also on the choice of the person about to be sent out there to conduct¹ our political concerns in that very new and critical situation². I really doubt, whether in the compass of the three Kingdoms a person could be found so furnished at all points with the powers and properties necessary for that very delicate service. I rejoice accordingly not a little at Sir G. E. having undertaken it. On the same principle, and with the same views, I am perfectly well pleased to remain myself in the situation in which I have acted hitherto, and in which it appears to me, in the present state of things, that my support of the same cause is likely to be most effectual.

In the affairs of our Armies in the North³ I wish I had the same congratulations to offer⁴. From the moment that I had reason to believe (I know not how truly) that the plan of our operations in that quarter did not bring with it the full appreciation of the best military judgements on the spot, I must confess I was full of alarms. I hope our success at the other end of France, as well as in the Expedition now fitting out, will serve to cover and heal this wound; and keep the publick opinion right upon the subject of the war, where its steadiness is most to be doubted, which is the point wherein a failure is most to be apprehended. You have received from Norwich probably an account of a seditious paper which made its appearance immediately on the miscarriage at Dunkirk, but which drooped and died away on the news of the success of Toulon: so little true is it, that the progress of arms has no influence on that of opinions.

¹ Interlined "have the conduct [of]."

² Interlined in place of "very new and critical situation," "part of the world."

³ Interlined in place of "our Armies in the North," "the Northern armies."

⁴ Interlined in place of "I had" etc., "the same cong. could be offered."

PITT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 13.)

HOLLWOOD,

SUNDAY, *Oct. 13th*, 1793.

SIR,

I received yesterday the favour of your obliging Letter enclosing several Papers from Mr Hippiusley, the substance of which I had before learnt in some Measure, but less fully, from the Lord Chancellor. Allow me to return you my thanks for the Communication, and at the same time to beg your Permission to retain the Papers for a few days, in order to examine them more at Leisure than I have yet been able to do. I partake thoroughly in your sentiments both with respect to Toulon, and to the Person with whom the Political concerns arising out of the Possession of that place are entrusted.

This Event seems to me to furnish a better Opening than would have presented itself in any other Way for facilitating the Restoration of regular Government in France, and for terminating the War satisfactorily, perhaps speedily. In Sir Gilbert Elliott's hands, I am sure every Advantage will be improved to the utmost. I need not say how happy I should have been if your Concurrence of Opinion on the great Questions now depending had led you also to take an active share in conducting the Affairs of Government. At least however I have the satisfaction of knowing from Experience how much the Public may benefit by your Exertions even in your present Situation. The Check before Dunkirk is certainly much to be regretted. But unless any Impression should be produced by it at home to impede the Vigor of future Operations, The mischief will I trust be little felt in the general Scale of the War. We expect in a few Days important Accounts from Maubeuge. Success in that Quarter would in a great measure relieve us from any further Anxiety on the Side of the Netherlands, and lead to further vigorous Measures, either before the end of this Campaign or very early in the next. I have enquired about the Paper transmitted from Norwich

which I understand was immediately referred to the Attorney General.

I have the honor to be with great regard, Sir,

Your obedient and faithful Servant

W. PITT.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 25.)

[*End of Oct., 1793.*]

MY DEAR SIR,

I do not exactly know, though I think I can partly guess, in what manner the present situation of things appears to you. To me it is a subject of the most serious anxiety. I went to Bright-helmstone, thinking to pass from thence to Portsmouth, and on, thro' Winchester, home. But the news of the fresh defeat¹ in the Netherlands brought me hither. Yesterday a sort of message came from Macbride² announcing that this defeat has been followed on the part of the Allies with a great and decisive Victory. I have seen the Lieutenant dispatched by Macbride with this News, which has many particulars inducing one to believe that it is founded. But as the account particularizes neither time nor place, I am obliged, however reluctantly, to suspend my entire reliance on its Truth. This day will clear up the matter.

I trust that the good Event of this affair will enable us (though such an Event rarely disposes us), to a calm and unprejudiced review of the whole plan of the War—which in my opinion has been totally wrong—and that the bad military plan has arisen from the false political principles on which it is formed. If we have succeeded, I must consider it as a great escape. No Victory, however great, can reconcile my mind to this Business of Maubeuge; no more than it could to the affair of Dunkirk, where indeed Victory was in a

¹ Raising of the siege of Maubeuge, consequent upon Jourdan's victory at Watignies, 16 Oct. 1793.

² Rear Admiral John Macbride, commanding in the Downs.

manner impossible. I feel no great pleasure in the Expedition against Martinico—if that should be, as I greatly fear it is, finally resolved upon. All these, and many more considerations, give me, at times, more uneasiness than I am able to express. But the fault is not wholly in our ministry, the whole body of the Alliance is concerned in it. Kings can never be brought to a decision, in the way they proceed in, by any Victory or Victories. However, I wish you to consider these Hints of mine as for your own breast: into which I wish more fully to unbosom mine—praying to God that no hasty word from you or me may give an advantage to the Jacobin Enemy here. If we criticize, let us criticise to amend, to help, to supply—even possibly to encourage. But let us strengthen the principles we support, and give no advantage to those who find fault with conduct, because they are utterly irreconcilable to principles. Our principles are Antijacobin. We cannot be neuter. We are on the Stage; and cannot occasionally jump into the Pitt or Boxes to make observations on our brother Actors. Such are those, at home or abroad, who abhor Jacobinism as we do, and who act against it, *bonâ fide*, though with a thousand Errours. I have written something to the Ministers, and I have twice seen them, and spoken my sentiments very freely and very fully. I think we do not disagree in any principle nor in any Measure; but in the time and the order in which Measures are to be taken and pursued, to be sure we differ—and this I take to be a very important part of the consideration. Here I am without any assistance, out of my own walls, to correct or to advise me, or to co-operate with me. In the world as well as in the House of Commons, no motion is received that is not seconded. I do most earnestly wish to see you. Clouds lower all over the Horizon which alarm, but do not dispirit me if you keep up your Vigour. *Heu quianam tanti cinxerunt aethera nimbi!—quidve pater Neptune paras*¹?

Do not you think the new act of Regicide the smallest part of the wickedness? Oh! God! the charge! and the last article particularly. All this is but the unfolding of the Germ of Jacobinism. For God's sake come to town. Again and again I want consolation and assist-

¹ Virgil, *Aen.* v. 13.

ance. You cannot withdraw yourself from the World now, in the Vigour of your Age and faculties, without a Crime.

I hear nothing to confirm the News. But there have been three actions at La Vendée. The Royalists failed in one, Noirmoutier, but succeeded in three others, all very important.

I am ever, my d^r Sir, with true regard, y^{rs} etc.

EDM. BURKE.

WINDHAM TO BURKE¹.

(Burke Corr. iv. 179.)

FELBRIGG,

Nov. 1, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

The desire of obeying your summons might be motive sufficient to carry me to town, without allowing the reason which you assign, if I could be sure that the meeting of parliament would be delayed long enough to admit of my coming back again. Till it shall be determined that parliament is not to meet till after Christmas, I could wish to defer a little my going to London, that I may not begin my winter residence sooner than is necessary. To go to town from this distance, without a long period before one, must be going for good.

I fear that *good* in that sense, is the only good that would attend my going at present. I have no counsels to offer but what I must learn from you; nor any means of enforcing them, but what they must have already from your authority. Authority, probably, of any sort, can now do but little. What remains of the campaign, and of the fate of the armies, must be determined probably by the events, for the result of which I am waiting with the most anxious expectation. In a letter which I had from Brussels of the 21st great anxiety was expressed for the army of the Prince of Coburgh; and what was worse, the same was said to be felt in the army itself.

I have not the least doubt of what is right to be done by us; namely to maintain the war, in and out of parliament, by every

¹ The rough draft, 37843, ff. 27—28, differs slightly from the letter actually sent.

possible means. But I tremble to think, should disasters increase, how long this may be in our power. Toulon and Weissenburgh, if they keep to their mark, will, it may be hoped, preserve the balance for this year.

The murder of the queen of France is an event that appears more shocking (I know not certainly for what reason) than even that of the king. The length of her sufferings, though urged commonly with a contrary view, makes one less endure that they should terminate at last in death. One hoped for some period in reserve, that might have softened the memory of her past woes, and brought some retribution of happiness in this life; a little longer respite and relief, one hoped, might have reached her. All is now extinct! An act of such savage and unrelenting cruelty,—of such black and unprovoked guilt,—I suppose is hardly to be paralleled; as a case can hardly be found of life ended in circumstances so dreadful, so destitute of all external support, so beset with every thing to embitter and sharpen the last agony. All that the imagination pictures of death had been hers for long past;—seclusion, silence, solitude, ignorance of all that was passing, separation from all the visible world. Her pursuers seem, beforehand, to have plunged her into the tomb, that its horrors might have time to sink into her mind,—might pervade and occupy every region of the soul. It was wonderful how her courage was able to sustain so long a conflict; or how, in fact, she contrived to preserve her senses. It is a strong proof of the vigour of her mind, and a presumption highly favourable to the virtuousness of her character. She seems to have retained her dignity and firmness to the last; to have been wanting in nothing that the occasion required; to have sustained, throughout, the part she was to act, worthily of herself, and of those whom she represented. The asserters of monarchy, as opposed to modern doctrines, need wish for nothing better than such a contrast as is formed by the conduct of the king and queen, compared with that of their destroyers.

In this solitary place, I have little communication with the world, except occasionally by letters, and know but little therefore of the language generally talked. In fact, in matters of this sort, people

seldom talk any language but what they are taught ; and therefore till they assemble in town, or parliament sets them a-going, they have no very decided opinions. To me, the necessity for the war seems so impossible not to be seen by the commonest understanding, the motives for persevering in it to be so powerful, that I cannot but think it must be the fault of those who should direct the public mind, if the clamours against the war gain any great ground. The artifice of those who wish to conceal and give effect to their wishes in favour of the French system, under a pretended horror of war, is surely so easily seen through, that it can never produce much effect. Our first debates in Parliament must be directed, I think, to strip the mask from this miserable hypocrisy;—it surely cannot be a difficult task.

I shall at all events come to town before Christmas. If parliament does not meet, I shall be desirous of coming very speedily.

Ever, my dear Sir,

Yours with the greatest truth

W. WINDHAM.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 29.)

BECONSFIELD,

Nov. 4, 1793, an æra yet¹.

MY DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you when I was last in town, wishing, if possible, to have some conversation with you on the present unpleasant state of the affairs of mankind. I must conclude that some accident prevented my letter from coming to your hands—else I cannot guess on what account I was not favoured with an answer. Since then things look something so very like desperate about the sole affair, I have much at heart, that I do not now wish to trouble you to come up if some other affair does not bring you this way. O! poor Poitou! Tho' I am overwhelmed by these Calamities, I am not

¹ *I.e.* not yet superseded, in England, by the Republican calendar.

overpower'd; and am ready for any good word or work. I suppose you have read with some attention the proceedings against the late Queen of France. Adieu, my dear Sir,—give me the consolation of hearing from you, and believe me ever very faithfully and aff^{ly} yrs.

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iv. 177.)

[*About 5 Nov.*¹ 1793.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I can say nothing certain about the meeting of parliament; but if I were to judge from the prorogation, which carries us to the fifth, I think, of December, without stating that we were then to meet for the dispatch of business, I should conclude we were not to meet before the holidays.

You see by my last that I am not now so eager about your coming to town as I was when I wrote before. I have nothing very distinct to propose to you. I confess it would be a matter of support and consolation to me that you should be in London; and that I might converse with you on the ideas which, from time to time, float in my mind on the present very critical state of public affairs. I find that all the demands of duty and all the feelings of resentment and indignation that agitate me are no more than necessary to keep my mind from sinking into a state of despondency. I do not easily persuade myself, when I am stimulated out of that temper, that I ought to wait for what I can do in my place in parliament, when everything is gone by, and we are left only to praise or blame, to defend or to extenuate, as long as there is a possibility that a hint thrown in at a proper time may give such a direction to affairs as we could wish. It is for that reason I think we ought to be on as amicable terms with those who conduct them as we can, in order to keep the communication for our sentiments open; and that when we suggest anything which at first may not be in agreement with their plans, it may appear as the admonition of a friend, rather than the reproach of an adversary.

¹ Dated in the *Correspondence* October, but evidently between 4 and 7 November.

I do not know that I shall correspond with Sir Gilbert Elliot, because I do not know that he at all desires that I should do so¹. I am very much afraid that he fell immediately into the hands of the intriguers. This I am sure of, that I was not at all in his confidence, or in that of the ministers, in any thing relating to his mission; though I spent a day with them and him, when we talked over, much at large, the affairs of France and Europe, on the general principles of which we had no very material difference. The having, or not having, confidence, is a matter of fact. I shall converse with you on these circumstances, which you may easily believe are not very pleasant to me, when we meet.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. iv. 189.)

FELBRIGG,

Nov. 7, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will have received, before this, my answer to your letter, and find that I am ready to come whenever my presence shall be necessary or useful. Though you give me, for the present, a dispensation, I am half inclined not to make use of it, but to yield to the wish of being for a while nearer the centre of counsel and intelligence. Your letter is written in a tone of dejection that makes me apprehend something worse than has yet reached me, or suspect that I have seen our situation more favourably than I ought. The worst news is undoubtedly from La Vendée; yet unless you have further accounts, confirming those of the convention, I cannot abandon my hopes upon the strength merely of what they say. Besides the allowance to be made for exaggeration, and often for total fabrication, the war of La Vendée does not seem to be of a sort which temporary ill success will eradicate. One may hope that

¹ The precise occasion on which this new feeling of distrust had arisen does not appear, but the real ground for it was doubtless in Elliot's acceptance of Pitt's policy of supporting the adherents of the constitution of 1789, while Burke would hear of nothing but an unconditional restoration of the monarchy.

the whole of that country is so thoroughly impregnated with hatred and horror of the present system, for which new reasons, too, are arising every day, that they never can do more than stop its effects for the moment, and that the first opportunity will call them out again with their original vigour.

In all other quarters our affairs seem to be going on with reasonable success. No fears, I hope, are entertained, at least no new or special ones, of our being forced from our hold on Toulon. The progress of the northern armies must, of necessity, be slow; they are there riving the block at the knotty end. But I cannot but hope that at the southern extremity the work will go on quicker, and that a rent may be made by our operations there that will reach far into France.

What is your opinion of the declaration¹? I think, in one passage, they are yielding too much to the adversary, and by seeming to give up part of the question, making the defence of the remainder more difficult. Why is all right of interference in the affairs of another country, even without the plea of aggression on the part of that country, to be universally given up? The more I have thought upon that opinion, the more satisfied I have been, that it is a mere arbitrary assumption wholly unsupported by anything in reason and nature, and in direct repugnance to everything which the maintainers of that doctrine would be compelled, and even ready, to allow. In other respects it seems to be judicious, and it is certainly well drawn, and I should hope would produce the best effects; particularly if, as I see in the papers just received, the Austrians have taken possession of Alsace in the name of Louis XVII.

The poor departed queen! How cheering would such intelligence have been to her! How much does one wish that she might have lived to see herself and her son restored in part to their former situation; or rescued at least from the fangs of these hell-hounds! How painful is the reflection, that whatever good may now befall, she no longer remains to enjoy it!

From the delay occasioned at Ostend, the West India expedition

¹ By the British Government, on the objects of the war, 29 Oct. 1793. It will be found, among other places, in the *Parliamentary History* for 1794.

is, I suppose, laid aside. The opinion which you seem to have of it has taught me not to regret its loss. The fever, too, that rages so dreadfully in some of the islands, might itself have been a reason, I should conceive, for not persisting in it.

Mrs Burke, I hope, and all your family are well. Let me beg you to present my best respects, and to believe me,

Dear sir, Ever most truly yours

W. WINDHAM.

The system of atheism will now, I think, not be denied. What say the religious dissenters to this? The worthy bishop who believes that the God of nature and liberty needs no *intermediary*, will perhaps reconcile them. They are perfectly satisfied that there should be no religion, provided there is no establishment.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 31.)

[*About 8 Nov., 1793.*]

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your second very kind and very satisfactory letter, just as I was going to thank you for your first.

I do confess, that I feel myself gradually sinking into something like despondency. It is not from the events of War, which, as one might expect, have been chequer'd. A little security towards a defensive is promised to us in the Netherlands. The affair of Weissenburg¹ seems to me one of the finest things in military History. I can scarcely, as an operation of War, imagine anything beyond it. But it is not from our defeats, that my hopes are damped, but from our successes. If we had been only beaten, better conduct and greater force, with our share of the Chances, might set us right again. But I see nothing w^{ch} all the successes we have had, and much greater than I dare to look for, can do towards bringing things to the conclusion we wish, as long as the plan we have pursued, and still pursue, is persevered in. When

¹ Captured by Wurmser, 15 Oct. 1793.

I have the pleasure of seeing you, we will talk over this matter in the Detail.

I agree with you that the proclamation is well drawn; perhaps too well drawn, as it shews too much art. I admit that it seems, more than anything else that has yet appeared, to depart from the unfortunate plan of making war against France, and to direct it where it ought to be directed, to the relief of the oppressed, and to the destruction of Jacobinism. I wish however that nothing had been said about indemnity. It is a thing unheard of in this stage of a war; and as in fact we have no pledge whatever in our hands but Toulon, it looks as if we meant to keep that place, and the ships in the harbour, for that indemnity, though surrendered to our faith upon very different Terms. This previous demand of indemnity, which has a sort of appearance (even so much as perhaps to hazard the whole effect of the Declaration), of Fairness, is yet so very loose and general that I scarce know what it is that we and the allied Courts may not claim under it. The worst of the matter is, that the only object which we have hitherto pursued, is the previous security of this indemnification.

The thing however that perfectly sickens me in this Declaration is its total disagreement with everything we have done or (so far as I see) that we are going to town¹. We promise protection and assistance to those who shall endeavour the Restoration of Monarchy in that country; yet, though Poitou is in a manner at our door, and they have for eight months carried on a War on the principles we have pointed out—not a man, not a ship, not an article of stores have been yet sent to these brave unfortunate people; all the force we can spare was destined for our indemnity; and when now released, I do not know with what prudence, from the Flemish service, it is intended again to go [to] the West Indies. No talk, nor no thought of giving the least of the succour we stand engaged for, and which common justice and common policy ought to have induced us to send, though we were under no positive engagement at all. This, joined with our refusing to recognise that Monarchy in those who have a right to exercise its authority, is a defeasance to our

¹ *sic*.

Declaration which nothing but a total Change of conduct can cancell. However, though I am grieved beyond measure and mortified at this proceeding, our only hopes are from these people. The conduct of our late party is so absurd, contradictory and self destructive, that I cannot easily express it. But on all these matters we shall talk seriously when we meet, which I trust will be soon. Oh! what you say of the Queen in your two letters is like what I should expect from your feelings on that the most dreadful scene that ever was exhibited to the world! Stupified as I was at the enormous wickedness of the actors, as well as at the *nature* of it, which was worse, in my opinion, than its magnitude, and astonished at the sustain'd fortitude and patience of the sufferer, yet my indignation at the unfeeling manner in which it has been received by the Princes of her own House, has perhaps been the strongest of my Emotions on this occasion. The wicked faction at Paris have [not] obtained the only end they could have proposed to themselves by this savage proceeding, the rendering vile and contemptible the Royal Character. The execution of a King or Queen by the hands of the common hangman, as the lowest and vilest of criminals, will produce no more effect than one of the periodical hangings of the Old Baily. I am quite of your mind that there is something that mingles more of disgust and of compassion with our horror in this Barbarity, even more than in the murder of the King. In fact women, and such women, are more out of the Field in such contentions as brought on these Events—and the circumstances themselves were much worse. Sure some Justice ought to be done to a Character which does so much more than Justice to the nature we belong to.

Hippisley is perfectly right in the principle of what he is doing. But he ought not to have acted without authority. The thing, by being new, if for no other Reason, and in direct defiance of the whole Train of our Statutes, required great management, and Monsignor Erskine ought not to come without previous arrangement with this Court, even if this had not been a thing wholly out of the ordinary Course. This additional Erskine (resembling very much the rest) is addressed to the Calvinists, Catholicks, Democrates, friends of the people, Cisalpine Clubbs, &c. The Pope's nuncio

addressed to a furious Antipapal party—and his nuncio to the K. of England addressed to the Chairman of the Club of the Friends of the People !!!

I am ever with the truest affection and most sincere respect,

Y^r faithful friend and humble ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

EARL SPENCER TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 119.)

WILDERNESS,

Nov. 11, 1793.

DEAR WINDHAM,

Though I cannot say that the general result of what I am going to communicate to you is of any very considerable importance, yet on the terms of perfect confidence with which you have done me the Honour to treat me, and on which I hope nothing will ever prevent our continuing, I think it indispensably necessary to acquaint you that having come here on a visit to Lord Bayham¹ for a night, I met Pitt. This meeting was not purely accidental, but L^d Bayham, who saw me in town at Lord Lucan's on Thursday, asked me to come, and told me that Pitt was very desirous of having an interview with me, which he thought might be brought about more agreeably to me in this mode than any other. I determined to accept of the invitation, thinking that it might possibly be productive of some good, and could not of any Harm, and at all events would probably afford us some information on the present state of affairs. I confess that the Result of it has not in this last point done a great deal, and on either of the former considerations it seems to have been as nearly as possible indifferent; it has however given me the opportunity of repeating to him what you had already expressed for me, and of finding that for the present, with respect to any internal arrangements, matters remain I think much as your conversation

¹ Afterwards 2nd Earl Camden.

with him at the end of the last Session left them, that is to say, still open, but not ripe for any decisive Step. He began by saying that he was desirous of having this conversation with me in order to explain anything relating to the events of the last Summer that might have left a wish for explanation on my Mind, and to give me any confidential information I might desire to have, and he might be able to give, respecting any such events and the general state of affairs. He then seemed to expect me to point out the particular objects on which I wished the conversation to turn ; and I own I felt very awkwardly at the moment, owing rather to the finding myself all at once in so very new a Situation to me, and I believe in consequence of this I did not explain myself at first so clearly and intelligibly as I could have wished. From this circumstance also it probably arises that I am not able to give a very exact detail of what passed between us on this branch of the subject, the general substance however I think was, that the idea of taking Dunkirk formed originally a part of the general Plan of the Campaign, in which it was hoped we might have got into possession of that Port (stated by him to be a considerable object as being a Port, and, from the nearness of its Situation to us, being more likely to give a favorable impression of the War in this Country), of a strong line of Frontier from thence all the way to Maubeuge inclusively, and even of having formed something like a winter investment of Lisle. I collect from what he said that it had been agreed that the Austrian Artillery should have co-operated in the siege of Dunkirk, but as they insisted on conducting that of Quesnay at the same time, it became necessary for our Army there to be supplied from hence ; and a Requisition was accordingly sent, and answered in such a manner that he speaks with great confidence of being able by a mere statement of dates to satisfy us that every exertion that could be made was made ; as to the want of Gun-boats, the fact is that they had no idea that they would be wanted, till a requisition was sent for them from the Army *actually before Dunkirk*, and then of course they could not come in time. All this, you see, in reality amounts to little more than saying Dunkirk was attacked with an inadequate force, and of course that all that we lost both in time, in stores, in expenses, in men and in

reputation by it was absolutely *en pure perte*. I dwelt a good deal (after I had recovered my nerves a little) and repeatedly, in the course of our conversation, on the expediency, if it could possibly be done, of making some satisfactory explanation at the opening of the Session upon these points, as they are likely to have taken some hold on the publick mind, and to have given strength to opposition in general; he did not say anything directly to this, but I think it did not pass without exciting his Attention. He seems in general to look on the French as being at present in a Situation less likely to dispose them to yield than they were some months ago, owing partly to the Surrender of Lyons, and partly to their successes in La Vendée, which he apprehends to be more decisive than they have ever been yet, though he did not seem to state any very clear Intelligence having been received about them. The ships that were sent away from Toulon to the other Sea-Ports, which was a Measure that has excited some Curiosity and no inconsiderable Surprise with many People, were sent by Lord Hood on his own authority, in order to remove about 5000 Seamen from the Place, who were very ill affected and who might have been capable of doing much Mischief, more particularly before they were so much reinforced there as they have since been. I think this is really the substance of what passed with respect to past Transactions. With respect to the future, I found him fully determined on the most vigorous exertions in the Prosecution of the War, in which he seems to expect a very cordial co-operation on the part of the Austrians; on that of the Prussians he is not so sanguine, and even went so far as to say he should not be much surprized if they were to withdraw altogether from the Confederacy; the other Powers will act as they are paid. (The Dutch, I think, we omitted to speak of.) He seems much inclined to the Opinion that there will be little hope of putting an end to the War without penetrating pretty far into the Interior of France, and in order to that, it should seem that we must possess ourselves of all the frontier strong Places (even including Lisle), before we can advance with any security; the ostensible Object of the War is I suppose to be consonant to the Language of the Declaration, namely such a Government in France as the rest of

Europe may reasonably depend upon for its future Peace and Security, hinting to them at the same time that a Monarchy of some kind or other at least is the most likely to attain those ends. On the Article of Expence he talked very openly, and said that he should want at least 12 millions for the Supply of the Year (I suppose of course the extra Supply for the War), but from the situation of the Finances he hoped to be only obliged to lay absolutely new Taxes to the amount of from three to 400,000, and he hopes to lay them in a manner that shall not be much felt. He asked me whether I happened to know anything of the D. of Portland's present Sentiments, I said I had heard that he was still disposed to support the War; in the course of this part of the Conversation, as he happened to mention your Name, I thought it not a bad opportunity to find out whether he had still any views similar to what he talked of with you last summer on the subject of political arrangements, so I said that you had according to his desire, as I believed, communicated to me at that time the substance of what had passed between you, and that I also believed you had expressed to him our joint opinion, that we thought upon the whole that an unconnected Support of Government would then have more weight and efficacy, than if we were to take a share in any part of the administration; I added that my opinion still continued on that subject pretty much the same, and that instead of having seen anything to alter it since, I found it rather confirmed by circumstances that had happened. He answered that he was very glad I had mentioned the subject, as it would give him an opportunity of saying a word or two upon it; though he should not have mentioned it first himself, because at the present moment there was no opening that would enable him to make any proposal of the kind; he however hoped that I should still allow the matter to remain open, and in case any occasion offered, such as to put it in his power to make any such proposal, that he might have my leave to communicate again with us upon the subject. This is as near as I can recollect the substance of what passed between us in private; on this latter part of our conversation I particularly noticed that he treated the Idea of a possibility of our coming into Office only on the Supposition of our doing it jointly, and I took the more particular

Notice of this, because in the conversation that I had at L^d Lucan's with L^d Bayham, which gave rise to this meeting, he had thrown out something like a Hint, which at the same time he assured me he was not commissioned to do, but which I think he never could have mentioned if it had not been concerted, that his Father L^d Camden now found it impossible for him to continue in Office, and that he had no doubt but that if that situation would be agreeable to me, the members of the Administration would be very glad it should be filled by me, but that at the same time there was not *at present* any opening for any other Cabinet Office; my immediate Answer to this was, first generally, the same sort of answer which I afterwards gave to Pitt, but besides, that even if I did think the occasion called for my coming into Office, I could not for a moment entertain an Idea of doing so unaccompanied by you; he again repeated that he had no commission to mention the matter to me, and that he did not know whether Pitt would mention it in the Interview we were to have; but I have myself very little doubt but that he was employed to feel the ground a little before that Interview, and that finding me so clearly determined on the Subject, Pitt took the Line I have already described to you in our conversation. I took occasion to express, in the course of what I said, my decided purpose of supporting Government in a vigorous prosecution of the War, and indeed I do not now see what other possible track we can pursue in order to arrive at a desirable termination of it, for any appearance of relaxation in our efforts now must unquestionably not only encourage the Enemy, but tend to discourage and disunite all our Allies, whom it certainly is of essential consequence, if possible, to keep together. I understand from Pitt that the last private Accounts they have from the Prince of Coburg mention his having rec^d positive Orders from Vienna to do every thing in his Power to force the Enemy to a general Action; it is therefore a most anxious moment, for he had begun to take measures accordingly, and the very next accounts may very possibly contain something of infinite importance. The accounts in yesterday's Extra^y Gazette from Toulon are, I think, very satisfactory, as they seem to indicate a great deal of Spirit, and a very cordial union among the different troops of the Garrison, which from all the

reinforcements they have lately received appears to be very equal to the defence of the Place; there have also been some great dissensions between the French and Americans, which may very probably turn to good account. Upon the whole, notwithstanding the unfavourable circumstances which in the course of this very long letter I have alluded to, I feel inclined to be in pretty good Spirits, and if we should happen to gain anything like a brilliant advantage to close the Campaign in Flanders, it may have a surprising effect in making people forget the former miscarriages, and join heartily in the maintenance of what every day becomes more and more the general cause of all that is good or estimable under the Sun. Pitt has promised to write me word if any important Event should take place, and of course you shall certainly hear from me again, if I should have anything worth communicating.

I am quite ashamed of having been so long-winded, but I did not well know how to abridge what I had to tell you, though after all I believe you will not think there is much in it. I go down to Althorp tomorrow and shall stay there till the beginning of Jan^y. Parliament I understand is to meet a few days before the Birthday.

Yours very faithfully and sincerely

SPENCER.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. iv. 192.)

FELLERIGG,

November 14, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just received your kind letter, which, besides the satisfaction it affords me in other respects, has gratified me not a little, by confirming an opinion which I had been expressing the moment before, in a letter to M^r Townshend. I had been stating to him my objections to that part of the declaration, where so much is said about indemnification, and my fears of the effect it might

have in destroying the whole benefit proposed by the measure. It is the vice of this administration, if it is not their wisdom, to be conducting great concerns too much with an eye to small ones. Dunkirk was to gratify the people here, by the idea of a security gained to trade, and an increase in revenue by the suppression of smuggling. The same idea too of indemnification was operating there, that is set so forward in the present declaration. It is difficult to say how far the compromise with the lower interests ought to be carried. One knows that little things, wholly neglected, will defeat the greatest; and the consequences must be equally fatal if they are attended to too much. One's fears of the present ministry lie on this latter side.

By a letter which I have got just now, your apprehensions about Poitou seem to be well founded. The ministers, as I understand, describe the situation of affairs there as very bad; or what perhaps is hardly less discouraging, seem to know very little about it. What can the meaning be, of their appearing to have done so little in support of the stand made in that quarter? Is it want of activity? Or want of address? Or has the sending any relief really been impracticable? One cannot help suspecting here also that selfishness may have had something to do; and that they have not been equally active, where success was to produce no immediate credit. I feel rather sorry to find that the expedition to the West Indies seems still to be intended.

The style of Mons^{gre} Erskine's introduction is precisely such as I should expect from Hippisley's counsels. I had many traces of it in his letters to me. He has no idea of conducting a thing of this sort, but in the way of a canvass; and in seeking to conciliate all interests, and to get support from every quarter. Such a mode of proceeding may be the best for a job at the India House, but must terribly disgrace a cause of this sort, even if it should procure a sort of bastard success. It might not be impossible, by seeing Erskine upon his arrival, to obviate part of this mischief.

My wish is so great of conferring with you on this and other still more important subjects, that I must come, I think, before long, to London, though I should return in a few days. The evil is, that

when one has got there, there come so many detainers, it becomes impossible to get away. Let me in the mean time, beg you to believe me,

My dear sir, Ever most truly yours

W. WINDHAM.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. IV. 201.)

Nov. 25, 1793.

Since I wrote last, the outside of affairs is a good deal mended, but they will not bear inspection. Our politics want directness and simplicity. A spirit of chicane, or something very like it, predominates in all that is done, either by our allies or by ourselves. Westminster-hall has ruined Whitehall; and there are many things in which we proceed more like lawyers than statesmen. If this distemper is not cured, I undertake to say, with the more positive assurance, that nothing but shame and destruction can be the result of all our operations in the field and in the cabinet. All the misfortunes of the war have arisen from this very intricacy and ambiguity in our politics; and yet, though this is as visible as I think it is real, I do not find the smallest disposition to make any alteration in the system. I have the greatest possible desire of talking with you on this subject. I think something ought to be done, and I know that I cannot act alone. If I had not always felt this, all that has happened within these three months would have convinced me of it. The very existence of human affairs, in their ancient and happy order, depends upon the existence of this ministry, but it does not depend on their existence only in their ministerial situation and capacity, but on their doing their duty in it. They are certainly bewildered in the labyrinth of their own politics. What you observe is most true; they think they can defend themselves the better by taking part of the ground of their adversary. But that is a woful mistake. He is consistent and they are not. He is strengthened

by their concessions. He avails himself of what they yield, and contends with advantage for the rest. As to the affairs of France, into which they have entered at last, it is plain to me that they are wholly confounded by their magnitude. The crimes that accumulated on each other astonish them. These crimes produce the effects which their authors propose by them. They fill our ministers, and I believe the ministers of other courts, not with indignation and manly resentment, but with an abject terror. They are oppressed by these crimes—they cry quarter—and then they talk a feeling language of mercy; but it is not mercy to the innocent and virtuous sufferers, but to base, cruel, and relentless tyrants. I shall explain myself more fully when we meet. People talk of the cruelty of punishing a revolutionary tribunal, and the authors of the denunciation of an infant king, concerning offences that the voice of humanity cannot utter, in order to criminate his own mother, at the very moment (this very moment) when they turn out of the house, which they have given them in the king's name, and taken credit for it, six hundred and eighty virtuous and religious men, in the beginning of a winter which threatens no small rigour, without a place to hide their heads in. I am mortified at all this, and I believe I express myself with some confusion about it. But we must endeavour to make our complaints rather effectual than loud. The other faction is dreadful indeed. It consists of two parts; one of which is feebly and unsystematically right, the other regularly, uniformly, and actively wrong; and what is natural, that which is the most steady and energetic gives the law to that which is lax and wavering. The entire unfolding of the Jacobin system has made no change in them whatsoever. Not one of them has been converted; no, nor even shaken; and those who coincide with us in the absolute necessity of this war (to which however they give but a very trimming and ambiguous support) are become far more attached than ever to their Jacobin friends, are animated with much greater rage than ever against the ministers, and are become not much less irritated against those of their old friends who act decidedly and honestly in favour of their principles. This state of things requires to be handled according to its true nature. If you and

I take the steps we ought to take, there is yet a chance that all may be right. For God's sake come, and come speedily, for no time is to be lost!

Ever most faithfully yours

EDMUND BURKE.

WINDHAM TO PITT.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 15.)

16 Dec. 1793.

SIR

The only point on which it is material that I should trouble you is that which relates to the communicaⁿ with the P[rinces]. On this I could wish to state such facts only as I have happened to hear, without repeating opinions with which you are already acquainted.

The P[rince]s I understand are full of jealousy of this conference which they understand is to precede any recognition of their title. Their jealousy turns principally upon these points:—

A fear lest the purpose of this country should be to limit their authority in order to keep Fr[ance] hereafter in a feeble and depressed state.

A fear lest the ideas of the constitutionalists should be suffered to prevail too much¹, in which their apprehension they are confirmed by the terms of the agreement at Toulon.

A fear lest views of indemnification should operate too far, and sacrifices be required of them inconsistent with their duty and character.

A general apprehension, growing out of all the former, that the Cabinet here is not in earnest in wishing to see them for the present at the head of the Royalist party: but would rather that the cause sh^d to a certain length be carried on² without them.

¹ Ideas—too much] altered from “the counsels of some constitutionalists, whom they suppose to be in this country should be too much listened to.”

² That the cause—carried on] altered from “carry on the cause to a certain length.”

These seem to be the principal heads of uneasiness, which whether reasonable or not must be considered as very excuseable in their situation.

The danger is, that in the state of ferment in which their friends must be, and stimulated in particular, as C[omte] D'A[rtois] is, by every feeling of duty and honour, He should take some rash step, and without consulting anything but his sentiments and feelings should throw himself upon the C[oast] of B[rittany] in the first vessel that he can procure.

The person from whom I hear this principally, and who though standing in an inferior situation to the D[uc] D'H[arcourt] is still much¹ in their secrets, is persuaded nevertheless that they are much disposed to be tractable, and would be quieted by a very general assurance relative to the above points, conveyed to them by a person in whose sincerity they could confide.

I know not that I can add anything to the simple exposition of the fact, coupled with those opinions which I took the liberty [of²] stating to you the other day. I am obliged at present to write rather in a hurry, as I wish to leave town today. I regret now rather that I missed the occasion of discoursing on any such points more at leisure, which you and M^r D[undas] were so obliging as to offer.

Another point occurs to me at this moment which I will just mention :—the subject of my communications from M^r H[ippisley]. By letters which I have just got from him, He expressed considerable apprehensions, giving at the same time his reasons for them, of the assiduities and instances of the Russian Minister: M^g^r E., who called upon [me] this morning, described to me, though without complaint, some embarrassments under which He felt himself, in not being able to write to his court what hopes he might entertain respecting some of the objects of his journey. He proposes in the course of a week to set off for Scotland.

¹ Interlined "greatly."

² MS. to.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iv. 205.)

BECONSFIELD,

Jan. 8, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

Taking it for granted that business of importance called you to Norfolk, and has kept you there, I did not choose to break in upon your business; [n]or if you wished for a little repose did I choose to disturb your quiet. Alas! if I had done so, I could perhaps have done little myself, and perhaps you could not have done much more to prevent the disasters which are likely to fall upon Europe. Toulon is not only a calamitous but, in my mind, a most disgraceful affair. We really stand in need of men of capacity for matters of the least difficulty. The whole stock of abilities in Europe perhaps is not equal to the demand; but we had resolved not to profit of what there was. I have a strong opinion that Frenchmen are best for French affairs. I have an opinion too, which I don't know whether I can make equally evident; it is, that the emigrants have better parts than the people among whom they have taken refuge. This I know would be reputed heresy, blasphemy, madness, etc. etc. But I am almost convinced that such is the fact, and that we have suffered all that we have suffered, in these two campaigns, by repelling them and refusing to consult, and as much as possible in any way to use them, in their own affairs. To this I attribute, amongst other causes, but to this principally, our shameful flight from Toulon. But if my speculations be false and unfounded, come and help me to make them better. You will soon be wanted, and I really wish you here before the birth-day. The earlier the better. I am not very sanguine about the effect of anything; but it is not our hopes, but our duty, that is to call forth our exertion. I think just in this bad state of our affairs we are doubly bound to show ourselves at court.

I am ever most truly and affectionately yours

EDMUND BURKE.

I do not believe the Christian army yet done up. But we do not make a movement towards them; we expect them to do everything for us; and then we will condescend to take the command of them, and make them act under us and for our purposes.

RICHARD BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 33.)

Jan^y. 8, 1794.

MY DEAR WINDHAM

I left my father at Beaconsfield this morning: he agreed with me that it was full time you should come up. The events which have happened furnish abundance of matter on which he wishes to talk with you: And surely it is right that you should be in town a few days before the Meeting¹. Dreadful as the aspect of things is, I do not like to despair, as the despair must be so very comprehensive if it exists at all. The resources of the civilized world cannot, one should hope, be exhausted tho' they have been so much squander'd. But I am sure, unless things get into a different train, both at home and abroad, we cannot be saved, if we can be so upon any terms. What is to be done, or how we can contribute to effect the proper line of action when we have found it, is the difficulty. Consultation, however, may suggest something. And while you have seats in Parliament, you are not wholly without resource. I understand Lord Spencer is in town. There seems to be still some possibility that the account which has been flying about for some time of the Duke of Brunswick's victory may be true: a person who is in correspondence with him asserts the fact from that correspondence, giving particulars of the action, which he says took place between the 28th and 30th. But this is not compatible with Wurmser's having crossed the Rhine, which I fear is too true.

Believe me most sincerely yours &c.

R. BURKE.

¹ Parliament met on 21 Jan.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 17.)

BULSTRODE,

11 Jan^y. 1794.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

When I look at the date of your letter, and recollect the sort of engagement I entered into at the time I returned you my thanks for it, I feel it quite impossible to justify my silence. It is very certain that the subject, on which I undertook to give you my sentiments more at length, abounds with so many unpleasant vexations and distressing considerations, that I can not but say I was always ready to avail myself of a pretext to lay it aside; and I can say with no less truth, that although the temper and habit of your mind appeared to me necessarily to suggest to you many questions and many cases of conscience respecting our publick conduct, the line which it became and behoved us to follow in the present Crisis seemed to me so plain and distinct, that even the jealousy of my friendship for you did not give me a moment's apprehension of any difference in our ultimate decision.

After all that has been said and written upon the subject, the Question for our present determination reduces itself to the consideration of what our Duty to the publick requires us to do as Whigs, that is, as members of a Party, or, as unconnected Individuals—Or, in other words, what are the most effectual means that can be taken by *us* for the support of the Government and Constitution of our Country and the general preservation and maintenance of Religion, Law, Good Order, in short, of the principles and purposes of Civil Society.

I know it has been very strongly urged, and by some for whose judgement and disinterestedness I have the highest respect, that our Duty calls upon us at this moment not only to co-operate or act in conjunction with Ministers, but to make so perfectly a common cause with them as to become members of their Administration by accepting certain offices which there is very good reason to believe

are ready to be offered to us ; that every mode of support other than this demonstrates a distrust and diffidence on the part of the Giver, which cannot but be injurious to the existing Government, be the hands what they may by which it is administered ; that support, to be effectual, must be given completely and indiscriminately, and cannot be dealt out by apportionment or measure ; that if given partially it betrays an indecision and unsteadiness of Character in the Givers, which in as much as it is prejudicial to them, equally diminishes and weakens the effect, even of that portion of assistance which is intended to be given ; so as to render it doubtful whether it is not rather of disservice than of any utility or benefit to the Publick. This subject has also been treated with ridicule as well as with good and powerful argument ; but it is an abuse of your time to take more notice of them, knowing as I do that there is not a medium through which this subject could be seen in which it has not been presented to your view ; that friendship, affection, partiality, admiration for you, integrity and artifice have all been exerted to the utmost to induce you to adopt this opinion ; and I only state them to shew you, that I am not unmindful of the arguments which have been used on this side of the question.

As I have been long in the habit of believing that certain obligations or conditions or Duties are respectively attached to every station or rank of life, I have no difficulty in admitting that the acceptance of office under certain conditions is one of those to which persons of our description are liable, but then I contend that the judgement of those conditions, under, what I shall call, his innate responsibility, rests with every individual. I am also decidedly of opinion that the existence of a Whig Party is essential to the well being of this Country, as well as to the preservation of its Constitution, and allow me, my dear Windham, when the name of Whig has been so prostituted and counterfeited as we have seen it, to deposit with you in a very few words my definition of the Whig Party, which I have always understood to be, an union of any number of persons of independent minds and fortunes formed and connected together by their belief in the principles upon which the Revolution of 1688 was founded and perfected, and by their attachment to the present

form of our Government, to all its establishments and Orders Religious and Civil; and the test of whose Conduct as a Party must consist in their never supporting, proposing, or resisting, any measure, in or out of Parliament, to which, if they were possessed of power, if they were the ministers of the country, they would not give exactly the same treatment.

Considering these positions as the standard or scale by which I am to try the propriety of the Conduct I am to hold upon all publick occasions, it is certainly not from envy, and I hope as little from resentment, that I feel myself under the necessity of adverting to the present Administration. Whenever I have thought their measures right I have supported them, and as often as I think so I will support them. In the conduct of the present War, though there are cases in which I may have thought some of them injudicious, and some which have been unfortunate, they will not, in the present moment, be arraigned or blamed by me; nor shall any encouragement be wanting on my part to bring the War to a successfull, a safe and honorable termination. I shall advert to the conduct of the present Administration no further, nor desire the principles of their formation and conduct to be remember'd no otherwise, than as they may be necessary to justify the opinion I mean to submit to you. It will not be denied to me that the characteristic feature of the present Reign has been its uniform and almost unremitting attention and study to debase and vilify the natural Aristocracy of the Country, and under the popular pretence of abolishing all party distinctions, to annihilate, if possible, the Whig Party. For these express purposes the present Ministry was formed, and that they have most religiously adhered to and most exemplarily fulfilled the purposes of their creation, every year of their existence would furnish us with abundant instances, but their conduct at the time of the Regency would of itself be sufficient, and I could be satisfied to confine myself to that measure only, could I forget what passed no longer ago than the latter end of the last Session with regard to the Election of the 16 Peers of Scotland. But to compress what occurs to me upon this subject into the smallest possible compass, I will not insist at all upon the objections which arise out of the Circumstances I have just

alluded to, and I will endeavour in the farther consideration of this question to make the interest of the publick the main and sole ground upon which my opinion shall be formed.

If the Case could admit of any exception, I should insist that there never was a Crisis in which it was of so much importance as the present, that the Characters of those who are admitted to responsible situations in Government should be exempt from all suspicion of being influenced by motives of interest; that considering the predicament in which We have so long stood in opposition or contradistinction to the present Ministers, it would be almost impossible for any of Us, under any circumstances which have as yet come to my Knowledge, to accede to, and suffer ourselves to be incorporated into the present Administration, without making ourselves obnoxious to such suspicions; from whence I conclude that it is inconsistent with the uniform tenor of our Conduct and incompatible with our duty to the publick to accept any offer which there is any reason to imagine will be made to us. The Conversations which passed about the time of the late Chancellor's removal from his office, the *Glass* which L^d Loughborough was desired by Dundas, and authorised by Pitt, to hold up to us, the overtures which have been since made to You, and the intimation of such a weight, of so many seats, in Cabinet as might be sufficient to ensure an honorable support to L^d S——, if He could be prevailed upon to undertake the Lieutenancy of Ireland, are proofs to demonstration to me, that no intention has ever been entertained, or perhaps conceived, of forming an Administration upon such a Basis as would comprehend the collective strength of the Country; that the ideas of strengthening government have not originated out of a wish or hope of Union, but, as I fear, out of a desire to take advantage of the differences which have unhappily arisen among Us, and with a view to make those divisions, which have been the consequence of them, irreconcilable and irreparable. This at least has been evidently the object of all the new Proselytes. When a Conduct has been pursued so very reverse from that which I should have thought the peculiarity and magnitude of the present Crisis required, and which the Duty of persons in ministerial situations imposed upon them, I own myself at a loss to give them credit for

that sincerity, or for any one of those motives, which will warrant me to suppose that any such inclination has ever been felt by Pitt, as can secure us, were we to consent to listen to his overtures, from the reproach of having made a sacrifice of our principles, or can give us admission to the publick service in such a way as to ensure to Government the full benefit of the Influence we derive from our Characters. If it was worth while to advert to the circumstances of the offer of the Marquisate of Rockingham to L^d Fitzwilliam and of the Garter to myself, there would appear in those trifles a want of sincerity so perfectly unnecessary that one cannot help wondering at it; but when it cannot help discovering itself on such very trivial occasions, you will allow that it must create an impression not very favourable to the idea of trusting what ought to be most dear to one to the Keeping of so inattentive and careless a Manager. So much then for the sincerity which we are to look for in these offers. One word now for the Candor; and to you and me, who each of us know a little of Ireland, it requires a measure of zeal for the publick service, which I confess I am not possessed of, to admit the state of that Country to be brought forward to be set in the front of all their arguments by the *present Ministers* as the inducement, the justification, the unanswerable reason for our inlisting into their Corps, for our not hesitating to accede to their Administration. And is it impossible to refuse one's hand to Sylv^r Douglas and decline the honor of being led by him through ranks of Renunciations, Commercial Propositions, Regency Measures, encouragements and discouragements to Catholics and Reformers, alternate submissions and resistances, new Jobs, new Boards and the whole Battle Array of temporary expedients to the Head of the Council Table in Ireland? But here I will leave this part of the subject, a very serious and most important one assuredly, and one which in my more enthusiastick moments I have looked to as one of the earliest and most certain instruments by which it might be hoped that the salvation of this Country, as well as that, might be permanently effected. But in considering the question of our acceding to the present Administration it is not the expediency or propriety of the measure as it concerns any of us personally that I trouble my

head about; it is solely the effect which it would have upon the publick mind, and its tendency through that Organ to render Government more or less respectable, concerning which I feel any way interested. It must be allowed that there are several persons known by the name of the Opposition or Whig Party who from the respectability of their Characters possess a considerable share of the good opinion and esteem of the Publick. Some of them certainly owe this to their Talents and Abilities, but all of them are at least as much indebted for it to the ingenuousness, the integrity, and disinterestedness of their conduct. As long as they preserve this title to the publick esteem, so long will they have it in their power, either as Individuals or as Party men, to give very great assistance and strength to Government by their avowed sanction and support of the measures which Ministers may bring forward—in their private Situations they can give energy to measures which want force, they can controll and suppress others before they can have risen to a state to be obnoxious, they can in many cases counteract popular prejudices and engage and ensure popular favour; from the confidence they possess, from the impossibility of any jealousy or suspicion attaching to them, they can give the tone to the publick mind, and very nearly be able to place every measure of Administration in the light in which they wish it to be seen. But let them accede to the present Administration, let them take offices under Mr Pitt, and from that moment their weight, their consideration, their very names are lost. Will it ever from that moment be a question what may be the Opinion of Mr Windham, L^d Spencer, L^d Fitzwilliam, or any other person of that description? Whether suspicion or distrust shall follow that step, I don't here inquire, I will even suppose that the publick will do you all perfect justice,—but you become involved in the mass of Administration, you become the adherents and followers of Pitt. You may be of some use in Council, but your Station in publick Opinion is gone, it is lost, and, as far as I am able to judge, can not in the present moment be compensated by any good which may be done by your obtaining Seats in the Cabinet. As upon the Party, the effects of this conduct cannot but be productive of very material injury; and to one devoted to Party as I am, for the reasons

which I have stated in the former part of this Letter, it can not but appear certain to produce the most serious injuries to the true interests of the Publick. It has of late been extremely convenient to some persons, to whom it has at other times been as convenient to be thought to be attached to the Whig Party, to suppose, and to endeavour to make it generally believed, that the Party was broken to pieces, that it was dissolved, that it had not any longer even the means of existence ; and I am sorry to say but with too much success. But according to my ideas of several of those who have professed themselves members of it, according to my idea of its Vital Principle, I shall deny the possibility of its dissolution.—It must be as eternal, as I wish the Constitution of this Country to be. It must be coexistent with the principles of Right and Wrong. That it has suffer'd, that some of its most precious and most lovely Ornaments have been torn from it, I admit and lament—the wound it received last year in one of its most capital Branches is an event which affects me with the deepest concern and affliction ; that no support can be now, at this moment, expected from that Branch I can not deny ; but let us hope that time may restore it to its Parent Trunk, and that it may again strengthen and invigorate its native Stock. If the existence of a Whig Party is as essential as I contend it to be to the well being and prosperity of the State, and that the inlisting with the present Ministers is productive of discredit and weakness to that Party, I conceive that it can not well be denied, under the actual circumstances of this Country, that a greater injury could [not] befall the *Cause of Government* than would ensue by the principal Members of that Party being induced to accept any offers which can be held out to them by the present Ministry. I have already said enough and perhaps more than enough upon this subject, and yet I can not pass over an argument arising, as I understand, out of the plans of the present opposition and the irreconcilable difference which is likely to continue for a very long period of time between us and that description of person. Because a certain number of Gentlemen, who have been in the habit of acting with us for several years, happen now to differ from us so essentially, upon points of very great and high moment and importance, as to have

occasioned a complete separation or breach between us; and because upon these points a perfect Uniformity of Sentiment and Conduct has prevailed between the Whigs and the present Ministers, it is urged that the Whigs ought to accept offices (seats in the Cabinet, I understand) if such should be offer'd them by the present Ministers. For my own part, I must say that no such obligation can be admitted by me, any more than that such a conclusion is warranted by the premises I have just stated. I should really conceive a proposal on the part of Administration to that effect to be particularly ill-timed and in all respects very injudicious and ill-imagined. It would seem on that part an admission of weakness which Our Conduct is intended to render unnecessary, and would be a disregard or abandonment of an Advantage which the liberality of that conduct would alone hold out to them. In another light it can not be considered but as liable to particular objection in the present moment, in as much as it would subject them to the imputation, with which they have been so often charged, of availing themselves with eagerness of these unhappy differences to prejudice the characters of that Party, and of those very persons, whom it is their interest to hold out to the publick view as disposed to give them a disinterested and consequently the most effectual support. So far with respect to the offer, now as to the acceptance of it; I can not discover, with all the attention I am master of, any inducement or justification, which this unhappy schism affords for it; in my view of it (the Schism) it operates the direct contrary way. I should infer that it rendered it necessary for Us to be more reserved and guarded in our conduct towards Administration, and to be more than ordinarily cautious in not giving ground for suspicion or jealousies of an interested nature; that, it being but too probable that the opposition even to *this War* would not be an unpopular conduct, and considering of whom that Opposition would be principally composed, comparisons would naturally be made of their conduct with that of the Friends they had quitted; and that this consideration ought to be an additional argument against our listening to any offer that would give color to suspicions, which I am very sure the factious spirit which animates and actuates some of those who compose that Opposition will not let them be backward

in raising and propagating. I therefore must be allowed to say, that to the best of my poor judgement I can not but rank this argument on the side of those which I should urge for deprecating any such offer in the present circumstances. There now remains, as I believe, and as you must hope, only one more subject for consideration, and on that I mean to say but very few words, as I conceive I have already in a great measure anticipated what would be applicable to it. But it having been asked, if a sincere disposition to form an Administration upon what we consider its true bottom should really exist, whether it should be frustrated? I will acknowledge to *you*, to whom I wish to speak without any reserve, that it is a question which under the present circumstances would require the most cool and serious consideration, and to which I am certainly not prepared to give an answer. It does not however seem to me to be an embarrassment of which We are very immediately likely to feel the weight, and in the mean time I have not the least hesitation in declaring, that considering the proofs I have had of the sincerity and candor of the present Ministers, and the judgement I have been able to form of the Habits of their minds and their general train of sentiments, it is my clear and decided opinion that the disposition, such as it appears to me, ought most certainly to be frustrated, and if possible the idea of it not suffer'd to exist, because it seems to me incapable of producing any other effects than the ruin of those who suffer themselves to be deluded by it, the inflicting a deeper wound on the Cause of Whiggism than it has ever yet suffer'd, and preparing a severer blow for the cause of Government than it has yet been exposed to.

You are now possessed of my sentiments respecting the conduct which it appears to me it would become us to hold in the present crisis. I have laid them very fully before you, and without any reserve. Should they be fortunate enough to meet your concurrence, and that of any other person (I mean L^d Spencer in particular) or persons to whom you may think proper to communicate them, I shall be extremely happy, and very ready to concert with you the best means of giving them effect. You can not be more anxious than I am to give the most effectual support to the War,

to re-establish the Reign of Order, and to vindicate the cause of Whiggism. I shall be in Town on Tuesday and hope to find you there.

I am ever, My dear Windham,
most sincerely Yours ever

PORTLAND.

WINDHAM TO PITT.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 19.)

[Endorsed, *Jan^y 20th, 1794.*]

SIR

I should hardly think it necessary to trouble you with any account of the meeting tonight at Burlington House, if a doubt thrown out on the part of one of the company—and that too of a sort perfectly consistent with the most entire radical agreement—had not produced some conversation, which rumour may easily improve into a debate and make use of to raise a question as to the general harmony and unanimity of the meeting.

The terms of the notes, if you have happened to see any of them, will sufficiently speak the purpose for which the meeting was convened: and the language of the D. of P. cannot be better described, than by saying that it went to the full extent of that purpose. Were you to suggest a speech which you¹ could wish him to deliver in the H. of Lords, you could not devise expressions more forcible and full than those which he made use of, both upon the nature of the war, the necessity of carrying it on, and the support to be [given] to those who had the conduct of it. Excepting the single instance which I have² * * *

¹ which you] repeated in draft.

² draft incomplete.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 35.)

SATURDAY [1 Feb. 1794].

MY DEAR SIR,

Mons^r de Robrie¹ as you know, was sent on a *special* commission by the Royalists of Poitou to this Government. After we had done him the honour of a prison on his arrival, he was at last brought up under a King's Messenger's protection. Entering into London, he is robbed of 143 Guineas and all his effects, and has one of his teeth knocked out, by way of *douceur*, with the handle of a Pistol. It was fifteen days after his arrival before he could see Mr Dundas. These people have thought proper to pay him not a groat more than the value or thereabouts, of which he was robbed—and for the rest of his payment, you see the letter he receives from the great Mr Huskisson², who pays him off in glory, tintamarre, drum and trumpet. One hundred and forty-three Guineas was a great sum for our poor Brethren of Poitou to furnish. They clubbed for it, and many assignats were necessary to furnish this sum. He counts his Baggage not³ to be worth not much less than forty pound. They have given him an hundred and ten pound. What Devil made them stop there I cannot conceive; He was entitled to nothing, or to his loss. This composition is the meanest and foolishhest thing I ever heard of. Surely, if the Royalists, our allies and under our declared protection, are not to have their Messengers maintain'd, by and by we can have no communication with them. I send you a paper in the *Gusto grande* of our offices. It will improve your style. Let me have it again. Can you call? Send me⁴ the letter again, if you cannot. I am ever aff^{ly}

y^{rs} &c.

EDM. BURKE.

You will of Course be in the House this day.

¹ Chevalier de la Robrie, an emissary of the Vendée general Charette. He was driven on to the Welsh coast by a storm and treated as a suspect person, see Pelham's Diary, Add. MS. 33630, f. 5.

² William Huskisson, afterwards the well-known statesman, had been appointed to a special office under the Alien Act.

³ *Sic.*

⁴ MS. Send me have.

In Pelham's Diary, Sunday, 2 Feb., is the record "dined at Burlington House with D. of Devon, Lord Mansfield, Spencer, Tom Grenville, Windham, W. Ellis, Burke, Ch. Townshend and F. Montagu. We agreed to meet every Thursday to consider the state of affairs¹." From about this time Windham appears to be the recognised, though unofficial, channel of communication between the French royalists and the British Government. On the 5th Pelham notes "Windham had had a conference with Dundas and it was settled that de la Robrie should have a small vessel of 36 tons, and a fast sailer, at his disposal with 1500 stand of arms and other warlike stores.... We discussed the advantage of establishing some communication with the Princes and appointing a sort of committee composed of the most respectable Frenchmen here, who might communicate with administration or, as he proposed, with W. and myself in order to ascertain what Frenchmen were in England, what their pursuits were, and if there were any who were not disposed to engage in the service of the royalists, to consider them as persons that ought to be watched, if not sent out of the country." A little later, 1 March, is an important note of a meeting of the Portland whigs to advise the administration as to the subsidy to the King of Prussia. "Burke with his usual and inimitable sagacity of judgement saw at once the *pour et contre*. He said that the K. of Prussia would be against us if he was not heartily and contentedly with us, and that if we refused the 60,000² upon the terms he offered we might expect he would withdraw the 40,000 and perhaps be against us, and that independent of the obvious disadvantage of beginning the campaign with such diminution of force we were to apprehend the effects of his possessing Mayence and Coblentz, by which he held the key of Germany and the command of the Rhine."

¹ The whole of this unpublished diary, Add. MSS. 33629—33631 is of considerable political interest. It covers the period 30 Nov. 1793—6 March 1794.

² Prussia was already bound by treaty to supply 40,000 men and now offered to supply 100,000 in consideration of a subsidy of two millions, whereof Great Britain was to provide two-thirds and also to be security for Prussia's own quota of one-fifth.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 39.)

LONDON,

WEDNESDAY, 16 *April*, 1794.

DEAR WINDHAM,

By wishing to do too much I have the mortification of having done nothing. To own the truth, I had a great desire to be authorised to say that your presence would be necessary in the course of the Emigrant Bill, and for that reason postponed my thanks and congratulations, which I have the most satisfactory assurances are both equally and most amply due to You for the Event of Saturday at Norwich, and in the mean time the Bill has escaped, notwithstanding all the obstructions with which it was threatened, and will get into our House today. From what I hear of it you have had a very great loss indeed in missing Burke's speech upon it on last Friday; there is not a Jacobine, who pretends to taste, who dares, for his own sake, to withhold from it his full tribute of applause, and I understand it was given in Burke's best manner. You had also another loss of a similar kind in not hearing L^d Mansfield in answer to L^d Lauderdale's motion for overhawling the sentences against Muir and Palmer¹. He completely upset all Lauderdale's Facts, his Law, his Arguments, and his Inferences, and the best proof I can give you of its effect is, that it appeared to be spoken as fast as any one could wish, and that he was, after the first 5 minutes, as completely in possession of the attention of his audience as any speaker ever was upon any occasion. Accounts have been received today from Sir Cha^s Grey, dated the 15th March from the camp before Cape Bourbon, in which he says that the whole Island of Martinico is in his possession excepting the Forts Bourbon and Royal, that the *latter* it was in his power to take whenever he judged it necessary, but wishing to preserve the former he should be sorry to be obliged to proceed to that extremity—since his landing he has lost in killed 71, and in wounded 193—and 3 missing. I suppose long before this the English Flag flies everywhere in that Island. Would to God I could see the *true* French colours hoisted in Nantes, St Malo's or in any town in old France;

¹ Sentenced to transportation for sedition.

this wish leads me naturally to represent to you that during your absence from hence the poor Royalists will not have a friend, at least not one that can say a word for them to Ministers, or who can support the *only cause* that can be successfull; for sure I am, that neither the capture of Martinico nor of all the French Possessions in the West Indies will have any effect here, or do one hundredth part of the service which the Common Cause would derive from the *real French Army* in the Vendée. Pray hold yourself engaged to dine with me the first Trial Day after the Holidays, and I will ask some true Royalist to meet you. The Clock strikes six.

Yours ever

P.

RICHARD BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 37.)

[Endorsed, *June*, 1794.]

MY DEAR SIR,

My father does not seem much pleased with the idea of the letter you mention'd, and which before I saw you this morning I did not conceive the nature of. However complimentary, it can be considered in fact as little more than a compliment. With regard to the lateness of the session Parliament has already been adjourned for a week, during which time the business might have been done. To say the truth, if some vote is not passed this session on the subject, Nothing is done. Should it be found impracticable to do any thing by vote this session, that becomes a conclusive reason why the peerage should be given; since nothing else can be conceived to give a solid security or an earnest in public estimation for a future provision. This, with the letter (to which it would give a real assurance), w^d certainly be sufficient.

yours &c.

R. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 39.)

TUESDAY NIGHT [*June 10, 1794*].

MY DEAR FRIEND—much Joy to you on this Naval Victory¹—tho' very dearly bought. Can you be down pretty early tomorrow morning? I am quite ashamed of putting you to such tasks—but the facility and nobleness with which you submit to friendly offices and the more trifling parts of Duty have no small Effect on mine and some other minds.

Gods! with what nameless grace the generous Mind
Performs whate'er its virtue has designed.

It is Dryden translating some verses on Plutarch. God bless you and again Joy which shoots across the gloom.

y^{rs} ever

E. BURKE.

RICHARD BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 41.)

June 19, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for your communication of the intentions of Gov^t with regard to my father, which, as far as the pecuniary consideration goes, are fully adequate to my wishes. But I cannot help expressing my surprise that there should be any thing like a demur with regard to the peerage. It is not that I lay much stress on what Sir G. Elliot conveyed to him from the Ministers on that subject. I think his pretensions stand upon grounds much stronger than any promises actual or implied. The terms used to Sir G. Elliot might have been general, tho' he seem'd to attach a particular sense to them. They were certainly however not such as to imply that the Ministers had very mean ideas with regard to my father, and I did not conceive that what was consider'd as a debt

¹ Lord Howe's victory, 1 June.

due from the country and due to the opinion of Europe at large, could be less than the peerage. However it is for the Ministers to judge what they will do or not do. It is a matter absolutely in their own breasts. It would be as ridiculous for my father at this time of day to haggle about the recompence for his services, as it would have [been] absurd in the Ministers to chaffer with him about the price before those services were render'd; services [for] which if the effects of them could have been foreseen or could have been bargain'd for, (if he was a man capable of bargaining) I do not believe any rewards the country has to bestow would have been thought too much. But in the retrospect things have a different appearance, especially when impressions are no longer fresh, and when the man is going off the stage and can be of use no further. It is therefore not unnatural that difficulties should be made. I confess that if the thing were to be judged of in the abstract, if my mother was not concern'd, and if the arrangement of his affairs did not imply the sale of his place in the country (in which so much of his as well as my mother's satisfactions are involved) I should certainly agree with you, that it would be more becoming the place and character my father sustains in the world—foregoing all expectations from the public—to cut himself down to the measure of his means (which, however moderate, are more than human necessities require) than to consent to have his services, which now stand in the first order, set down by a secondary reward at a secondary standard. As matters stand however, some sacrifice of dignity must be made to ease. And tho' I think he might expect an *otium cum dignitate*, and that the peerage is not more than his due, if I may say, the specific reward appropriate to his peculiar services, yet if the Ministers think otherwise and think that services like his can be paid in money—as far as my vote goes, I shall advise him to submit, and I see nothing else for him to do but to take what is given him with thankfulness and with as good a grace as he can.

I cannot think that the Ministers have sufficiently consider'd, or that it can be their intention that what they do should lose so much of its grace and effect with regard to the public, by what they withhold; or that they have reflected what will be thought, when it comes to be known that this was an object to my father and that it was

refused on any grounds whatsoever. If they do not give it to him, for God's sake, for what kind of services is it reserved, unless it's determined that it should never be given to civil service, or only follow in the common line of official promotion? Who[m] do they mean to make peers of in future? I say nothing with regard to the past, tho' I believe some might be found on the list whose services are not more brilliant or their fortune more ample than his. Indeed if it were a subject fit for me to discuss, I might compare his services for effect and public benefit, with those of any single man since the restoration. However this may end, I shall never forget your active friendship on the occasion. And depend upon it that He is sufficiently a philosopher, not only to bear the want of any reward at all, but perhaps what is more difficult, cheerfully to acquiesce in that which does not come to his ideas. Believe me

most truly

yours &c.

R. B.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 41.)

THURSDAY NIGHT, 3 *July* 1794.
near 12 o'clock.

DEAR WINDHAM,

My company had separated just before your Letter arrived, as you may probably know already by having seen L^d Spencer and Grenville, who intended to call upon you in their way home. I now regret your absence much more than I could have imagined I could have had any reason to do, because, from what I learn'd from Grenville, I concluded that your mind was made up to become a member of Cabinet and that the mode was become to you a very secondary consideration. I can not but wish you to reconsider this question, and to recollect that I may be under the necessity of bringing your doubts forward tomorrow in a place where I should be

very sorry that any ground could be given for suspicion or apprehension of backwardness in any, and more particularly in so conspicuous a Leader on our side as You certainly are. It would be idle to attempt to refute arguments of which I am ignorant. But I can not help asking whether the Opponent to your coming into Administration considered that measure in its bearings upon the general credit and character and interest of the Cause, and did give and was *capable* of giving its due weight and appretiating the difference of the Office of Sec^y of War as merely ministerial, or being a real efficient Cabinet employment, upon which my opinion of the propriety of your acceptance of it, principally, if not wholly, rests and depends. There are persons, very wise and virtuous friends of ours, and most active and zealous supporters of the Cause of Government, who endeavoured to make Lord Fitzwilliam refuse to take an active part in Administration. But they could not succeed.—I devoutly pray that further reflection will make them equally unsuccessfull in your case.

most sincerely

yours ever

P.

You will not forget that I *must be at S^t James's* tomorrow by half past 12.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST PERIOD OF THE COALITION. FITZWILLIAM AND IRELAND.

ON 20 July 1794 Burke received the thanks of the House of Commons upon the conclusion of the Warren Hastings impeachment, and directly afterwards retired finally from parliament. The ultimate arrangement in regard to a pecuniary reward was a pension from the Crown, not, as he would have preferred, a grant by parliament. On 11 July, the day of the prorogation¹, was matured the scheme for incorporation of the Portland whigs in the ministry. The arrangement was as follows :

Duke of Portland, Secretary of State for the Home Department,
vice Dundas².

Earl Spencer, Privy Seal, *vice* Marquis of Stafford.

Earl Fitzwilliam, President of Council, *vice* Earl Camden.

Windham, Secretary at War³, *vice* Sir George Yonge.

Loughborough had been Chancellor since 28 Jan. and Sir Gilbert Elliot, as we have seen, was employed abroad. The scheme therefore was presumably sufficiently comprehensive to fulfil the Duke's notion of a real basis, except in one particular, that of Ireland ; and in that respect the arrangement was understood to be left open to further changes as soon as certain hindrances to an immediate settlement could be removed. To try to state exactly the nature of these impediments, and of the understanding as to what was to take place upon their removal, is to plunge into a matter of acute controversy, in which we may more readily discern in the character of the actors

¹ The actual date of Earl Spencer's appointment was a few days later.

² Who had previously combined this office with the Board of Control.

³ But with a seat in the cabinet. Yonge was made Master of the Mint.

the impossibility of their co-operation, than we can reconcile their statements as to the matters of fact which were in dispute in the following letters. Pitt, we are told, had promised Lord Westmorland, the present Lord Lieutenant, before he went to Ireland, to give him on his return a dignity equal to that which he had previously held, viz. the Postmastership, and until this could be arranged was not at liberty to recall him¹. Portland, we are also informed, had been most anxious to go to Ireland himself and when, under his friends' representations that a subordinate position (for Ireland was subject to the Home Department) was not admissible for their leader, he consented to abandon this project, he at once thought of Fitzwilliam for the office². The problem is why in these circumstances it should not have been proposed at once that Westmorland should have the Presidency of the Council and thus leave Ireland free to Fitzwilliam. This was in fact the arrangement proposed by Pitt in October, and rejected by Portland, who wished to give the Presidency to Lord Mansfield³, but it then seems to come forward as a new suggestion. We are told that at Portland's first proposal Fitzwilliam had been unwilling to go at once for domestic reasons, but it is clear that these were not of a nature to make any long delay necessary, and within a month (early in August) we find that Fitzwilliam is busy making arrangements with his Irish friends as if his going were beyond all doubt, while Pitt still regards the matter as unsettled and looks upon Fitzwilliam's proceedings as equally premature and ill-judged. Possibly, in leaving the matter open, Pitt, whose own choice of a Whig Lord Lieutenant would have been Lord Spencer, still hoped that Portland would find a colleague upon whose discretion he could better depend. His misgivings as to Fitzwilliam were probably shared by Windham. At any rate there is evidence in the *Diary* that Windham regarded the settlement of July as in some way very unsatisfactory. After mentioning under 4 July the offer of "the place which I at present hold" he continues on the 5th "Went before breakfast to Grenville and afterwards to Burke's, and afterwards to

¹ Letter of Elliot of Wells to Sir Gilbert Elliot, *Life and Letters of Minto*, II. p. 387.

² Letter of Lord Mansfield, 12 Oct. 1794.

³ Elliot's letter, as above.

Burlington House, where I relinquished the objection made in my letter of the night before and contented myself with apprising the Duke with what I conceived to be the misunderstanding. Engaged to dine with Mr Ellis at Twickenham. Fell in with Lord Spencer on the road and proceeded in his carriage. At this time all seemed likely to be at an end, it being found that what I apprehended had completely taken place. 6th. I found a message from the Duke, and the conference that succeeded was of the most important nature. It continued till two in the morning and ended in a way that left me full of regret and dissatisfaction. Grenville and Lord Fitzwilliam, from whom I parted at the top of Berkeley Square, went on together without my feeling any wish to continue of their party." In the meantime Spencer, very soon after taking office, had been sent on a special mission to Vienna, and at the end of August Windham also went abroad to convey "the resolution of the Cabinet" to the Duke of York. Upon his return he found the difficulties of Ireland revived in the acute form already described.

Before these events took place Burke had suffered by the death, on 2 Aug., of his son Richard, aged thirty-six, the loss of one in whom were centred not only his domestic happiness but also his political hopes. Richard had succeeded his father as M.P. for Malton on 18 July and was in expectation, it would seem, of some office¹. At any rate, as his father's representative he must have been a person of some consequence in Parliament, although it is plain from Elliot's private letters and Windham's *Diary* that he had as yet failed to secure the general confidence of the party.

¹ This seems hinted, but I think no definite statement exists.

EARL SPENCER TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 127.)

VIENNA,

Aug. 12, 1794.

DEAR WINDHAM

I ought to have written to you a long while ago, but my journey so entirely turned my head, and the occupation I have had since I have been here has filled up so much of my time that I have not been able till this moment, and in chusing this moment for the purpose I do not treat you very well, for I am more than half asleep, having been the whole evening plodding over the long Letter which you will have the reading of from us in the Cabinet, which will very probably produce something of the like effect on the Readers as it has on the Writers of it; at least I am sure, if you read it, as we wrote it, at one o'clock in the morning, it cannot fail of doing so. You will see by the Contents of it, what a long way we are come to do, as far as it seems, very little, and you will not fail I daresay to observe that as we have been driving for nothing, we are determined you shall have at least a long reading for nothing. However as I am sure you will have had enough of our dispatch already, I will not give you a bad hash of it in my letter.

I promised Sir Sidney Smith to write to you something about what he calls his Ideas, but my own Ideas have really been so turned and twisted and jumbled about ever since, that I protest his have been pretty nearly shaken out of my head; in general however, I remember he said a good deal about French coasting Ships, which by their being very flat bottomed can row in shoal water where none of our Ships of War can follow them, and of course he is very desirous of having a fleet of flat bottomed Vessels at his Command, to go and knock them all to pieces. He does not seem to think much of the Scheme about Calais, but he has an Idea that something might be done at Havre; he is certainly an odd eccentric man, but he is very clever, and has a great deal of contrivance about him, and if he could any how be put into activity without giving offence to more regular and orderly sort of Geniuses, who I believe all look upon him as a

Fellow of the College of Physicians does upon a Quack Doctor, he might be of great service.

I cannot write this without telling how very much both L^y S. and myself are obliged to you for your very kind and friendly offer, which she tells me you made her the other day, of an Ensigncy in the Guards; we are both as much obliged to you as if we had been in the way of availing ourselves of it, and I am very glad it happened so, as it gave you an opportunity of multiplying your satisfaction by obliging somebody else besides us on the occasion.

Adieu, dear Windham, I wish much to be at home again and among you all. I feel quite out of my Element here, and though I don't know how much I might be in my Element if I were at home in my new situation there, yet I cannot help thinking I should be rather less of a Bear in a Boat than I feel myself in this still newer character of a Negotiator.

Yours ever sincerely

SPENCER.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iv. 227.)

Aug. 15, 1794.

A strange and unfounded report, I find, is rife all over Ireland, that I am to be made Provost of the University of Dublin. If my Richard had lived, for whom alone I could bear to take any charge, I would not accept it on any account. But it is not for that reason I mention it, but most earnestly and pressingly to put it to your conscience, not to suffer this great, important, and (just now) most critical of all trusts to be jobbed away in any manner whatsoever. It ought not to be suffered to enter into any sort of political arrangement. Religion, law and order depend upon this more than upon anything I know. You ought to be informed that the University sent over a deputation of their most respectable members to remonstrate upon an arrangement contrary to the statutes which was some time ago in agitation. The Provostship ought to be given to a

member only of the body ; and, for a thousand reasons, only to an ecclesiastic. There are indeed few others in the body. The *dispensation* from the statutes (a power unfortunately reserved to the crown) as exercised must be considered as a great abuse, and never was designed for such purposes. The body, I assure you, contains persons of great solidity, great erudition, and very enlarged and capable minds ; and, in that body, I trust none will be chosen on the recommendation of the Irish government, but that the sense of the body itself should guide the choice. I have no favourite, no connexion, political or personal, to warp my judgment on this point. The thing must pass through the Duke of Portland ; and I implore his grace, who, I know, loves religion, morality, and real learning, and has so great a trust in one great seminary of the Church of England, that he will not suffer another to be perverted from its purposes by any *dispensations*. The sure way is to follow the guide which ordinary law gives. There a man is always at least justified. The law is wiser than cabal or interest. This will do credit to the Duke of Portland's administration. God direct him and all of you. If I saw you, I could say much more on this subject, for though my heart is very sick, it has still these things in it.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 43.)

SUNDAY, Aug^t 17, 1794.

BECONSFIELD.

MY DEAR SIR

I always knew you to have a mind formed for generosity and friendship, and I have now experienced it in the way of all others most acceptable to me, that is in your protection of Woodford¹. My Richard was very solicitous for his establishment ; and the employ-

¹ Emperor John Alexander Woodford, appointed by Windham to be Inspector General of Foreign Corps in the pay of Great Britain. He held the office till 1801, and enjoyed Windham's full confidence ; but in 1809, after the exposure of certain abuses in contracts, in which his connivance was asserted, he found it necessary to leave the country.

ment which you have so very kindly bestowed upon him, entitling him to half pay, puts him out of anxiety for the future. It will be a satisfaction to you to know, that besides giving to my mind and poor Mrs Burke's a solid comfort, you serve a young man of very great honour and great good nature as well as of excellent Talents and much activity. There will appear in nothing you have done any the least Trace of blind partiality. He is too the son of an excellent father (of whom however I have not much personal knowledge), and who is, I believe, of remarkable ability in his profession, I mean Col. Woodford. If he is what I hear of him, he is a sort of man to be look'd to, for I fear we are not over rich in soldiership. Again a thousand thanks for what you have done for his son.

I have been talking with our excellent Dr Walker King¹ (who having been several times in Ireland with his father, the Dean of Raphoe, has very just notions concerning that Country) about the University. He tells me, indeed concurrently with the universal opinion, that Dr Murray has for several years governed the College as Vice-provost with the greatest credit, and indeed saved it from utter ruin; and that he is in the highest Esteem with the whole body. Now he is in the order of Gradation and would possess no power but what in effect he has long exercised; this would cut off all cabal and all bickering, and be a plain and simple answer to every kind of unstatutable applications from without and to all intrigues from within; not but that I believe, if the place were elective, they would choose of themselves this respectable Divine. Be sure, my dear friend, that I do not meddle in this affair from any predilection to persons: I do not know Dr Murray personally. If I have any thing personal in it, it is my earnest desire that every thing done in the Duke of Portland's department should be done to his honour.

Adieu, my dear Sir, pardon all the perhaps improper Liberties of your unhappy but most true friend

EDM. BURKE.

¹ Afterwards Bishop of Rochester, grandfather of the late Bishop of Lincoln.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 45.)

BEACONSFIELD, *Sept.* 28¹, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR

This will be delivered to you by M^{rs} Douglas Johnston. I understand she is the widow of an old and very meritorious officer who has not long since lost his life in the service, and that too in the exercise of acts of humanity in an extraordinary personal attention to the sick during the prevalence of an epidemick fever amongst the Soldiers under his Command. I am perswaded that you will think that Cases of this kind demand a very particular degree of favour and protection; and that nothing can so effectually reconcile your mind to the many unpleasant circumstances that you must meet in your Office, as the opportunities it sometimes affords of shewing an humane requitable consideration of those whose Case is in general hard enough. The families of those, the very nature of whose services tends particularly to leave them fatherless, will, in your Eye, be intitled to all the favour in the nature of things possible. It would be to mark, what is of all things furthest from my Mind, a distrust of the Benevolence of yours, if I pressed the matter further. M^{rs} Johnston will herself wait upon you, and state the particulars of her situation and the Object of her request.

I am ever with the greatest respect and affection

My d^r Sir, your most faithful

and most obliged humble Ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

¹ Endorsed, Received Dec. 2nd, 1794.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 47.)

NEROT'S HOTEL, TUESDAY AFTERNOON.

[Oct. 7, 1794.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Knowing your intentions with regard to a speedy return, I have not been without uneasiness from the late violent Winds, for I am still susceptible of fears and apprehensions. Thank God however that this is removed, and that you are safe in London. I am in London too. I am told that after the Grant of a Pension from the Crown decorum requires that I should go to the Levee. Not the acknowledgement, which I have as much satisfaction in making as I can have in anything, but the going to a public place is pretty painful to me. However, here I am to perform this act of Duty. If you can call, I shall be happy to see—not to talk to you of the affairs of the Continent which you have left, and from w^{ch} no good news, I fear, will ever come—but merely to take you by the hand and congratulate you on your return to your Native Land, which is the best of all and will I trust be the last devoured. Late may it be, but *ἔσσεται ἡμαρ*¹.—Adieu. I am ever affectionately

Y^r unhappy friend

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 49.)

Oct. 8, 1794, WEDNESDAY.

MY DEAR SIR,

You have, among the many wise and honourable things you have done, done nothing more wise nor more respectable to you than the establishment of the Comte D'Hector's Corps¹. There is a man who, upon every principle by which you have been actuated,

¹ *Iliad* vi. 448.² Composed of royalists from the French navy.

whether of true military policy, Humanity or generosity, is recommended to your attention; that is the celebrated Albert de Rioms¹, without dispute the first naval Commander in France. His reputation is perhaps enough. But our friend the Comte de la Tour du Pin, himself a naval man of great Knowledge as well as of Science in most branches, will say more to you on the Subject. I never apologise to you for putting you in mind of those who can add efficiency and lustre to the publick service and do honour to yourself. On the contrary, this is one of the best ways I have of shewing my sense of our friendship and of my many obligations to you. Ever, my dear Sir,

Y^r unhappy faithful friend

EDM. BURKE.

I go out of town today.

Fitzwilliam's indiscretion, in openly announcing, at a time when his own appointment was not yet made, or even publicly promised, the comprehensive alterations which he intended to make in the persons of the Irish administration, brought on an acute crisis immediately after Windham's return. Pitt was obliged to make it clear that such measures as the removal of the Irish Chancellor, Lord Fitzgibbon, were not contemplated in the agreement with Portland.

EARL FITZWILLIAM TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37874, f. 83.)

GROSVENOR SQ., Oct^r 11, 1794.

DEAR WINDHAM,

As we enter'd into administration together and professedly as members of one corps, I must not take the very important step of retiring from Administration without giving you the earliest notice of my intentions and my reasons for doing so—stripp'd of the history

¹ François (or Charles?) Hector d'Albert de Rioms.

of the transactions which led to my suppos'd destination to Ireland, all the particulars of which you are full as intimately acquainted with as I am, nay, better, so much of the previous negociation having pass'd through your hands, the story is not very long. I believe (but I am not quite sure) that I may be permitted to go to Ireland, but this permission is under conditions; and the conditions are in substance: that I step into L^d Westmoreland's old shoes—that I put on the old trappings, and submit to the old chains. The men, and of consequence the system of measures, to remain the same, with or without my approbation, and without any consideration for my responsibility to the King, the country, and my own reputation—these are now the terms. Will any man say, would any man have presum'd to have said last July, that at that time, when upon negociation the management of Ireland was transfer'd to the care of the D. of P., these were the terms or the spirit of the terms? For the safety and general good of Ireland, in my humble opinion, they should not be insisted on; for the honor of the Individual they must be rejected by me; and looking upon the proposal as a mark of indignity offer'd to me, it would be fit for me to mark my sense of it. But still what affects myself does not weigh most with me: in consequence of the certainty I entertain'd of going to Ireland I thought it a duty to look forward to the management of the Country, and therefore invited the most respectable persons of the Kingdom to communicate confidentially with me; and upon the credit of the situation I held myself out as intended to fill, I found them willing to let me into many of their private thoughts and opinions upon such things as I think they would not have open'd themselves upon under other circumstances. To them I feel myself bound in honor to atone for having misled them; to my own character I am bound to make clear in the most unequivocal and most overt manner that if I have misled and duped, I have done so because I was misled and duped myself. No act will be so overt, none will so unequivocally mark a sense of indignity and resentment, as a retreat from that Government which I charge with having duped me. In these sentiments and for these purposes I mean to take the earliest opportunity of entreating his Majesty's permission to give in my

resignation. The D. of P. and L^d Mansfield are both acquainted with my intention. L^d Spencer's great distance prevents my communicating it to him.

Sincerely yours

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 47.)

SATURDAY, 11 Oct^r. 1794.

7 P.M.

DEAR WINDHAM,

I have seen L^d Fitzwilliam, and He has written already to Ponsonby and Grattan to inform them of his determination, or at least to appoint them to meet Him for that purpose tomorrow.—To crown the whole, when I came home, I found a letter from Douglas¹ to King desiring to know what progress the King's Letters were in, which appointed *Him Sec^{ry} of State and the Bp. of Cloyne*² Provost, and urging King to forward them, as he (Douglas) intended setting out for Ireland on Monday or Tuesday if the *above* should permit: the whole of this must be stopped and given up, and the other conditions so arranged as to ensure that being complied with in a reasonable time, or I must see Pitt tomorrow or make an appointment with Him for the next day, to desire Him to apprise the King that I think it my duty to lay the Seals at His Majesty's feet the first time He comes to town. I am very sorry for it—and devoutly wish I had never come into Office.

Yours ever

P.

¹ Sylvester Douglas, afterwards Baron Glenbervie, was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Jan. 1794—Jan. 1795. The valuable sinecure office of Irish Secretary of State was intended for him by Pitt or his Irish advisers, but in Portland's view it could not fairly be given to one who was not a native of Ireland.

² William Bennett.

WINDHAM TO EARL FITZWILLIAM.

(Add. MS. 37874, f. 85.)

Private.

HILL STR., SUNDAY MORN.

[Oct. 12, 1794.]

MY DEAR LORD,

I hope that in pursuit of a purpose pregnant with consequences so very serious you will not suffer yourself to act from any impulse of passion, nor under any misapprehension of the merits of the case. Is the embarrassment that has arisen, fairly to be charged to the account of Pitt? and are the means of relieving it such in all their parts, as He can properly be expected to furnish?

The first consideration simply is, did Pitt, or did He not say from the beginning, that He could not open the situation of Ireland till He had provided for Lord W. another at his return, as good as that which He held before his appointment?—The second is, can Pitt without dishonour suffer a proscription of those who are principally marked out to enmity, (and will be represented as being wholly so,) in consequence of their support of his former measures? and has not He some colour for saying that if a measure so strong as the removal of the C. was intended, it ought to have been signified when the terms of the arrangements were first settled?

The evil has been, that things have been suffered to lye under a supposed general understanding, which ought to have been distinctly brought forward, and which were not of that sort, that an agreement to them should have been presumed. I really think, to speak in fairness, that P. could hardly have been expected, when He was augmenting his administration by a junction with another party, to give up at one stroke all his friends on the other side of the water to the mercy of those with whom He was connecting himself. Should you in such a case have thought such a conduct warrantable in yourself? We must consider them not according to their actual merits, but according to their merits as they appear to him, or at least as He is bound to consider them.

What I wish is, that it should be considered fairly how much change is absolutely necessary for carrying on the Government

according to your own and the D. of P.'s ideas ; (for such a change only can in any wise be insisted on ;) and then what means may be desired for effecting that, without violating the protection which Pitt is called upon to give to those who have supported uniformly his former government.

The question of L^d Mans^d¹ is a separate consideration, and must be decided by inquiring, which of the two, He or L^d W., should in reason be expected to give way.

If, after every endeavour used, these opposite considerations must at last remain irreconcilable, there will at last be the consolation of thinking that the ruin which will ensue, and of which it is difficult to foretell the extent, will not have happened but by the unhappy course of things, and not for want of the exertions of those whose duty it was to prevent it.

I am, My dear Lord,

Yours with all truth

W. WINDHAM.

LORD MANSFIELD TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37874, f. 88.)

Private.

KENWOOD, SUNDAY NIGHT, Oct^r. 12, '94.

DEAR SIR,

I will make no apology for troubling you upon a subject that is equally interesting to us both. I see with infinite concern that we are upon the Brink of a Rupture, the Evil consequences of which are such as I am sure no man living can calculate ; a few words of explanation at the Time would have prevented a great Part of the Mischief. I knew from the Duke of Portland from time to time every thing that passed, and can safely venture to assert that had He conceived it possible that He was not to have the entire and perfect Management of all Irish Business, the Negotiation would have instantly stopped. The Prospect of being of use in Ireland

¹ *I.e.* whether he or Lord Westmorland should succeed Fitzwilliam as Lord President. The office eventually found for Westmorland was that of Master of the Horse, *vice* the Duke of Montrose, made Lord Justice General.

was His great Inducement. He wished Himself to go thither, which I for one combated to the utmost of my Power, being persuaded that it was essential to the success of the arrangement which you well remember I had so much at Heart, that He should hold a great Responsible Situation in the Cabinet. His Desire of going to Ireland is irrefragable Evidence of the Light in which he considered what had passed upon the subject. Had He imagined that He was to follow the same Plan that had been followed by Lord Westmoreland, and was to work with the same Instruments, He would no more have accepted the Lieutenancy of Ireland than He would have taken the Government of Botany Bay. In consequence of the repeated Sollicitations to Him not to think of Ireland for Himself, He relinquished that Idea, and then thought of Lord Fitzwilliam, who, if it had not been for a Delicacy to Lady Fitzwilliam, would have accepted instantly, and all this Mischief would have been prevented.

It was perfectly understood that Lord Westmoreland was to be properly provided for, that is, that the moment an opportunity offer'd of providing for Him properly in any Department, that opportunity was to be seized, and He was to be consider'd as having a prior claim to any other Person to a situation similar to that which He formerly enjoyed; with Respect to the Chancellor of Ireland, I always understood that it was a thing perfectly settled that the D. of Portland was to have the entire management of all Irish Business, that it was not to be merely nominally in His Department, but that the real Manag^t was to be in Him. It followed of necessary consequence that the L^d Lieut. he named was not to use the Instr^{ts} he found, but was to make use of other means, was in a word to connect Himself with the Ponsonbys and their friends. Of all this I could give such evidence as would be rec^d in a Court of Justice. The fair and manly manner in which Mr Pitt seems determined to support the War makes me regret this Misunderstanding the more. I say it with heartfelt anguish, my clear opinion is that if there should be a Rupture at present the Country is undone.

I am, dear Sir, most faithfully yours

MANSFIELD.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 49.)

MONDAY MORN. 13 Oct^r, 1794.

DEAR WINDHAM,

I was just going to desire You to let me see you again this morn^g, when Grattan sent me word that He wished to call upon me. I expect Him every minute. If You should come while he is here I would follow you to your office. This Business must be decided, for otherwise Pitt can not, and we *can have* no chance of preserving anything like Government in Ireland.

Yours ever

P.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 51.)

WEDNESDAY [? 15 Oct. 1794¹].

MY DEAR SIR,

Since I saw you, I have been full of uneasy and perplexing thoughts. Every thing which is done now will have consequences of much more extent than the acts themselves seem directly to import. For God's sake let nothing be precipitated. I shall open myself to you most fully and confidentially. But I don't like to trust the post. I don't like neither that you should be from the scene of action. But if you send your servant hither I shall send to you by him what I threw down last night. I am ever your most faithful

unhappy friend

EDM. BURKE.

I send this by M^r Browne.

¹ Endorsed 17th? Oct. '94, but 17th was Friday.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Diary, p. 328.)

BEACONSFIELD, *Oct.* 16, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,—

What I enclose to you with this is to yourself principally; but if you enter into my ideas, it is ostensible to Mr Pitt and Mr Dundas; and if you will to the Chancellor. This I don't desire, because in case of our agreement the arguments will come with far more authority from yourself. But if you think that my opinions would tend in any way to strengthen yours, you have my permission to show them to any of the three, upon whom you conceive they are the most likely to make an impression. Mr Pitt is surprised that your friends should think of breaking the Ministry at such a time as this; sure it is equally surprising that he should do so by putting them out of their offices, for it is plain they cannot stay in them under the present circumstances. It is he who is chiefly responsible (almost, indeed, wholly so) for carrying on the public business in this dreadful season. It is his system and his power that are to be supported; and I never knew a Minister that would not do a thousand things to gain, and to keep, men convenient at least to the support of his power and reputation, especially when the greatest interests ever stated¹ were depending. When he will do no one earthly thing to keep them, they must think, and the world must think, he wants to get rid of them. I wish you to speak fully to Dundas on this business. I conceive all others ought to be postponed to it. I don't know what part he has in the intrigue. But if he is clear of that, he is open to reason, and is not without influence. You mistook me about Grattan. I did not wish Mr Pitt to reason him into a dereliction of opposition to Lord Westmoreland, for I well knew that a dread of that opposition would be a principal inducement to Mr Pitt to be reconciled to your friends; I wished you to get the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, with whom he was in confidence, and to whom he came over in order to destroy the system of the junto and to pledge himself to support them in opposition to it, to consult

¹ ? staked.

with him what it was best for that purpose to do, whether to resign or not, or what other course to take. I should have made a great scruple of conscience to do anything whatever for the support, directly or indirectly, of a set of men in Ireland, who, that conscience well informed tells me, by their innumerable corruptions, frauds, oppressions and follies, are opening a back door for Jacobinism, to rush in expenses and to take us in the rear. As surely as you and I exist, so surely this will be the consequence of their persisting in their system. As to yourself, you have my most ardent prayers that God would direct you, through your reason, to the best course. I am glad that neither the Duke of Portland, nor Lord Fitzwilliam, nor you, have called on me for my opinion on your conduct. Whatever you do will be well intended and well advised. You will then smile and ask me, why I am so free in my advice to Mr Pitt through you, who has asked it as little as the rest? Why, because the whole depends on him. If he mistakes, so as to let this Ministry go to pieces, we shall, along with him, be all undone. The Lieutenancy of Ireland is an arrangement subservient to the reformation or to the continuance of the abuses reigning in the country, and he who is the real Minister can alone support or destroy them. I ought to have sent my packet earlier. But I have been oppressed with such sinkings and dejection of spirits, that in adding, after the coming of your messenger, to what I wrote the night before, I have been obliged to go into the open air from time to time to refresh myself, and thus the time went away. This is dreadful! dreadful! beyond the loss of a general battle. I now despair completely. I begin to think that God, who most surely regards the least of His creatures as well as the greatest, took what was dearest to me to Himself in a good time. Adieu!

Your ever faithful and obliged friend, and humble servant

EDMUND BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Diary, p. 321.)

Oct. 16, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR

My state of mind was not the most enviable before the present unhappy misunderstanding. I cannot think without horror on the effects of a breach in the Ministry in this state of our affairs and just before the meeting of Parliament. It will complete our ruin! Every honest man in every country in Europe will by this event be cast into dismay and despair. It looks as if the hand of God was in this, as it is strongly marked in all the rest. However, we must still use our poor human prudence, and our feeble human efforts, as if things were not, what I greatly fear they are, predetermined. I am out of action, but not out of anxiety. I feel deeply for yourself—I feel for my other friends—I feel for the general cause. Ireland, the country in which I was born, is the immediate subject of the dispute: Lord Fitzwilliam, the man in the world I am most obliged to, is the party chiefly concerned in it. To Mr Pitt—the other party—I have strong and recent obligations. Before I had any such I was clearly of opinion that his power and all the chance we have for the rescue of Europe were inseparably connected. You know that, though I had no part in the actual formation of the present system of a coalesced Ministry, that no pains were wanting on my part to produce the dispositions which led to it. You, of all men, therefore, are the best judge how much I am in earnest that this horrible breach should not be made. How to prevent it I know not; I cannot advise. I can only make statements, which I submit entirely to your judgment; I do not write to anyone else, because you alone have desired to hear my sentiments on this subject. I will trouble you with no other view of the matter, than as it concerns the interest, the stability, perhaps the existence, of Mr Pitt's power. I was one of those who were of opinion that he could have stood merely on his own basis; but this was my private speculation, and hardly justified, I fear, by the experience of mankind in cases any way similar. But to have gone on without this new connection, and to bear the loss of it, are two very different things. The accession of a great mass of reputa-

tion, taken out of a state of very perilous and critical neutrality and brought to the decided support of the Crown and an actual participation in the responsibility of Measures rendered questionable by very great misfortunes, were the advantages which Mr Pitt derived from a coalition with you and your friends. I say nothing just now of your weight in the country, and the abilities, which, in your several ways, you possess. I rest only on your character and reputation for integrity, independence, and dignity of mind. This is everything at a moment when opinion (never without its effect) has obtained a greater dominion over human affairs than ever it possessed; and which must grow just in proportion as the implicit reverence for old institutions is found to decline. They who will say that the very name which you and the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord Spencer have, as men of unblemished honour and great public spirit, is of no use to the Crown at this time, talk like flatterers who despise the understandings of those whose favour they court. It is as much Mr Pitt's interest, as a faithful and zealous servant of the Crown (as I am sure he is), to hold high your honour and estimation with the public, as it is your own. Can it be preserved if Lord Fitzwilliam continues in office, after all that has happened, consistently with the reputation he has obtained, and which, as a sacred trust for the King and country, he is bound to keep, as well as for his own inward satisfaction? I will not say that Lord Fitzwilliam has not, in some respects, acted with a degree of indiscretion. The question is, whether Mr Pitt can or ought to take advantage of it to his own material prejudice? You are better acquainted than I am with the terms, actual or understood, upon which the Duke of Portland, acting for himself and others, has accepted office. I know nothing of them, but by a single conversation with him. From thence I learned that (whether authorised or not) he considered without a doubt that the administration of Ireland was left wholly to him, and without any other reserves than what are supposed in every wise and sober servant of the Crown. Lord Fitzwilliam, I know, conceived things exactly in that manner, and proceeded as if there was no controversy whatever on the subject. He hesitated a long time whether he should take the station; but

when he agreed to it, he thought he had obliged the Ministry, and done what was pleasant to the King, in going into an office of great difficulty and heavy responsibility. He foresaw no other obstacles than what were found in his own inclinations, the nature of the employment, and the circumstances in which Ireland stands. He therefore invited several persons to converse with him in all the confidence with which men ought to open themselves to a person of honour, who though not actually, was virtually in office. Whether the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam had reason for this entire security, you are better able to judge than I am. I am sure they conceived things in the light I state them, though I really think that they never can reconcile it to the rigid rules of prudence with regard to their own safety, or to an entire decorum with regard to the other Cabinet Ministers, to go so far into detail as has been done, until all the circumstances of the appointment were settled in a more distinct and specific manner than they had been. But I am sure they thought that a very large discretion was committed to them; and I am equally sure that their general places¹ (so far as I know them) were perfectly upright and perfectly well understood for the King's service and the good of his empire. I admit, and lament, the error into which they have fallen. It must be very great, as it seems Mr Pitt had no thought at all of a change in the Irish Government; or, if he had, it was dependent on Lord Westmoreland's sense of the fitness of some other office to accommodate him on his resignation of the great place which, for five or six years, he has held. This puts off the business *sine die*. These are some of the mischiefs which arise from a want of clear explanation on the first digestion of any political system.

If an agreement is wished, criminations and recriminations, charges and defences are not the way to it. If the communication hitherto has not been as full and as confidential as it ought to have been, let it be so now. Let it be such as becomes men engaged in the same cause, with the interest and with the same sense of the arduous trust which, in the most critical of all times, has been delivered over to them by their King and country. In this dreadful situation of things,

¹ ? plans.

is it not clearly Mr Pitt's interest, without considering whether he has a case as against his colleagues or not, to keep up the reputation of those who came to his aid under circumstances liable to misconstruction; liable to the exaggerated imputations of men, able, dexterous, and eloquent; and who came to him when the whole of the affairs under his administration bore the worse aspect that can be imagined? I am well aware that there is a sort of politicians who would tell Mr Pitt that this disgracing his colleagues would be to him a signal triumph, and that it would be to the public a splendid mark of his power and superiority. But alas! it would be a triumph over his own force. His paramount power is well understood. His power is an object rather of envy and terror than of contempt. I am no great dealer in general maxims. I am sensible how much the best of them are controlled by circumstances. But I am satisfied, that where the most real and solid power exists, there it is the most necessary, every now and then, to yield, not only from the real advantages of practicability, but from the advantages which attend the very appearance of it. What is given up by power, is a mark of moderation; what is given up because it cannot be kept, is a mark of servility and meanness. What coffee-house politician is so grossly ignorant as not to know that the real seat of power is in Mr Pitt, and in none of you who by the courtesy of England are called Ministers? Whatever *he* gives up will be manifestly for the King's service; whatever *they* yield will be thought to flow from a mean desire of office, to be held without respect or consideration. If he yields any point, he will be sure to put out his concessions, to be repaid to him with usury. All this unfortunate notion of triumph, on the one part and the other, arises from the idea that Ministry is not *one* thing, but composed of separate and independent parties—a ruinous idea, which I have done everything in my power to discourage, and with a growing success. I can say almost with assurance, that if Mr Pitt can contrive (and it is worth his while to contrive it) to keep his new acquisition of friends in good humour for six months more, he will find them as much of his party, and in my opinion, more surely to be depended upon, than any which he has hitherto considered as his own. It is of infinite importance to him to have it *thought* that

he is well connected with others besides those who are believed to *depend* on him.

If it is once laid down, that it is true policy in Mr Pitt to uphold the credit of his colleagues in administration, even under some difference in opinion, the question will be, whether the present is not a case of too much importance to be included in that general policy, and that Lord Fitzwilliam may very well give up the lieutenancy, and yet hold his office, without any disgrace. On that, I think, there can be little difference in opinion. He must, to be sure, resign; and resign with every sentiment of displeasure and discontent. This I have not advised him to do; for, most certainly, I have had no conversation with him on the subject; and I am very glad I have not had any such discourse. But the thing speaks for itself. He has consulted with many people from Ireland, of all descriptions, as if he were virtually Lord-Lieutenant. The Duke of Portland has acted upon that supposition as a fundamental part of his arrangement. Lord Fitzwilliam cannot shrink into his shell again, without being thought a light man, in whom no person can place any confidence. If, on the other hand, he takes the sword, not only without power, but with a direct negative put upon his power, he is a Lord-Lieutenant disgraced and degraded. With infinite sorrow I say it—with sorrow inexpressible—he must resign. If he does, the Duke of Portland must resign too. In fact, they will both consider themselves as turned out; and I know it will be represented to them, because I know it has been predicted to them, that their being brought into office was no more than a stratagem, to make them break with their friends and original natural connections, to make them lose all credit with the independent part of the country, and then to turn them out as objects of universal scorn and derision without party or adherents to resort to! I believe Lord Fitzwilliam has in his bureau one letter to this effect—I well recollect that he was much affected by it, and indeed doubtful of accepting—perhaps more than one. I am certain, that whether they stay in under a state of degradation, or are turned out, their situation will be terrible; and such as will be apt to fill men with rage and desperate resolutions. Both their coming in and their going out will be reviled; and they will be ridiculed and insulted

on both by the Opposition. They will affect to pity them. They will even offer to pardon them. Amongst Mr Pitt's old adherents, as perhaps you know as well as I do, there were many who liked your coming in as little as Mr Fox or Mr Sheridan could do. They considered Mr Pitt's enlarging his bottom as an interloping on their monopoly. They will join the halloo of the others. If they can persuade Mr Pitt that this is a triumph, he will have it. But may God in His goodness avert the consequences from him and all of us!

"But why," will some say, "should not Lord Fitzwilliam take the Lord-Lieutenancy, and let the Chancellor remain where he is? He will be good-humoured and subservient, and let the Lord-Lieutenant do as he pleases." But after what has passed, the true question is, which of these two is to govern Ireland. I think I know what a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is, or I know nothing. Without a hearty and effectual support of the Minister here, he is much worse than a mere pageant. A man in the pillory is in a post of honour in comparison of such a Lord-Lieutenant. "But Lord Westmoreland goes on very quietly." He does so. He has no discussions with the junto who have annihilated English government. Be his abilities and his spirit what they may, he has no desire of governing. He is a Basha of Egypt, who is content to let the Beys act as they think proper. Lord Fitzwilliam is a high-minded man, a man of very great parts, and a man of very quick feelings. He cannot be the instrument of the junto, with the name of the King's representative, if he would. If Lord Fitzwilliam was to be sent to Ireland, to be exactly as Lord Westmoreland is, I undertake to affirm, that a worst choice for that purpose could not be made. If he has nothing to do but what Lord Westmoreland does, neither ought Lord Westmoreland to be removed, nor the Chancellor, no, nor the Chancellor's Train-bearer. Lord Fitzwilliam has no business there at all. He has fortune enough. He has rank enough. Here he is infinitely more at his ease, and he is of infinitely more use here than he can be there, where his desire of really doing business, and his desire of being the real representative of the Crown, would only cause to him infinite trouble and distress. For it is not to know Ireland to say,

that what is called opposition is what will give trouble to a real Viceroy. His embarrassments are upon the part of those who ought to be the supports of English government; but who have formed themselves into a cabal to destroy the King's authority, and to divide the country as a spoil amongst one another. *Non regnum sed magnum latrocinium*: the motto which ought to be put under the harp. This is not talk. I can put my hand on the instances, and not a doubt would remain on your mind of the fact. His Majesty has the patronage to the Pashalic, as the Grand Seignior has to that of Egypt, and that is all. Such is the state of things. I think matters recoverable in some degree; but the attempt is to be made.

If Ireland be well enough, and safe enough, as it is; if the Chancellor and the Government of the junto is good for the King, the country, and the empire, God forbid that a stone in that edifice should be picked out to gratify Lord Fitzwilliam, or anybody else. But if that kingdom, by the meditated and systematic corruption (private, personal, not politic corruption) of some, and the headlong violence and tyrannical spirit of others, totally destitute of wisdom, and the more incurably so, as not being destitute of some flashy parts, is brought into a very perilous situation, then I say, at a time like this, there is no making questions about it mere discussions between one branch and the other of administration, either in England or Ireland. The state of Ireland is not like a thing without intrinsic merits, and on which it may be safe to make a trial of skill, or a trial of strength. It is no longer an obscure dependency of this kingdom. What is done there vitally affects the whole system of Europe. Whether you regard it offensively or defensively, Ireland is known in France. Communications have been opened, and more will be opened. Ireland will be a strong digue to keep out Jacobinism, or a broken bank to let it in. The junto have weathered the old European system of government there, and brought it into utter discredit. I look in this affair to Ireland, and in Ireland to Great Britain, and in Great Britain to Europe. The little cliques there are to me as nothing. They have never done me a favour nor an injury. But that kingdom is of great importance indeed. I regard, in this point, all descriptions of men with great comparative indifference.

I love Lord Fitzwilliam very well ; but so convinced am I, on the maturest reflection, of the perilous state into which the present junto have brought that kingdom (on which, in reality, this kingdom, at this juncture, is dependent), that if he were to go with a resolution to support it, I would, on my knees, entreat him not to have a share in the ruin of his country under the poor pretence of governing a part of it. Oh ! my dear friend, I write with a sick heart and a wearied hand. If you can, pluck Ireland out of the unwise and corrupt hands that are destroying us. If they say, they will mend their manners, I tell you, they cannot mend them ; and if they could, this mode of doing and undoing, saying and unsaying, inflaming the people with voluntary violence, and appeasing them with forced concession ; their keeping the “word of promise to their ear and breaking it to their hope” ; their wanton expenses, and their fraudulent economy ; all these, and ten times more than these, but all of the same sort, are the very things which have brought government in that country to the state of contempt and incurable distrust under which it labours. It cannot have its very distemper for its cure. You know me, I think, enough to be quite sure that in giving you an opinion concerning Mr Pitt’s interest and honour, I have not an oblique regard, at his expense, to the honour and interest of others. No ! I always thought advice the most sacred of all things, and that it always ought to be given for the benefit of the advised. I am now endeavouring to make up my accounts with my Creator. I am, almost literally, a dying man. I speak with all the freedom, and with all the clearness of that situation. I speak as a man under a strong sense of obligation to Mr Pitt, when I assure him, under the solemn sanction of that awful situation, that my firm opinion is, that by getting rid of the new accessions to his strength, and especially upon the ground of protection to certain Irish politicians, (at what distance of time I cannot say) but he is preparing his certain ruin, with all the consequences of that ruin, which I tremble to think on. God bless you all, and direct you for the best !

Ever, ever, your affectionate and unhappy friend

EDMUND BURKE.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 59.)

SAT: 18 Oct^r. *midnight.*

DEAR WINDHAM,

You need not be under any apprehension upon the subject of concessions—but notwithstanding I shall be much disappointed if I don't see you tomorrow morning, and I wish you would come soon after ten. Grattan is to be here at 12, and he is always punctual. I find from Dr Laurence that Burke has been all this morn^g writing to the Chancellor, and L. also tells me that B. has been more agitated, and that his spirits have been more affected and harried within these two last days than for some weeks past, and L. supposes that it is to be intirely attributed to paragraphs which have appeared in the papers respecting the Gov^{mt}. of Ireland.

Yours ever

P.

DUKE OF PORTLAND TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 61.)

SUNDAY, 19 Oct^r, 1794.
half past 4 p.m.

DEAR WINDHAM,

Our Conference of this morning makes it absolutely necessary that we should have another tomorrow, for otherwise Grattan's apprehensions of a rupture will ruin every thing, and had I sent him to Pitt we should have been completely demolished wholesale and retail. I have therefore desired that we may have another conference tomorrow, and that You and L^d. Mansfield may be of the party. We have agreed to meet at *twelve* o'clock. I depend upon your coming and have sent to Lord Mansfield, of whose assistance at all times and on all occasions We can have no doubt.

Yours ever

P.

Grattan can not fall into any snare, for he dines with me and can not be entrapped between this and to morrow, but I am sure if Pitt had got hold of him he would have got the complete dominion of Ireland forever if he had so pleased.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Diary, p. 330.)

BEACONSFIELD,

Oct. 20, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I had your letter. Everything is undone, if the matter is put upon private and personal ground. If it be a question of men and of favour, it is quite clear what men and what favour must prevail; and, as to the public opinion, it will be clamorously against those who come in and go out lightly in the most critical seasons. I have thought this matter over and over. I have looked back at our former experience; and I have considered the genius of the new times. I have considered the character of the men you are come to act with and your own character, as well as the character of the Opposition and the bystanders. I have compared all these with the situation of England and of Poland and of Europe. I never gave anything in my life so thorough a sifting. The result is that I am clearly and decidedly of opinion that the Duke of Portland, nor Lord Fitzwilliam, nor yourself, ought to resign; but to wait—for what I foresee will be the case of some of you—to be turned out. You are in a post of strength, if you know how to defend yourselves. Whereas nothing but obloquy, unpopularity, disfavours above and below, and complete impotence will follow you if you are once out; and never can you come in again, but on the ruins of your country. But when I say the resignations ought not now to be thought of, I do not say that the matters for which you contend ought to be abandoned; but the very reverse. You are where you are, only to act with rectitude, firmness, and disinterestedness, and particularly to resist *ad internecionem* the corrupt system of Ireland, which goes

directly to the ruin of the whole empire. I seemed to think in my last letter, of the resignation of the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam as inevitable. That letter was the result of my second thought. You know that in my [first], to which I am now come back, I stated this position to you as a thing between the two alternatives. In substance perhaps my opinions are the same: go out they must. I believe it is a thing that does not depend on them to avoid—the question is on the manner of it. Clearly, the most reputable thing in every point of view is that they should not commit suicide, but be slain on their post in a battle against this Irish corruption, which is another thing than the misapplication of so much money. If indeed my opinion was wholly changed on reflection, why should I be ashamed of it in one of the most difficult questions that ever was? Whatever is done, I am against all squab proceedings, such as seem rather the effect of temper than principle. They are very ill used—very ill indeed; but their own conduct has been such that they have put themselves in the wrong; and it is not by base yielding or by a stubborn perverseness they can get right, but by producing such a body of principle as *really* actuates them, and which will make their mode of proceeding, however irregular, a thing of very subordinate importance. The closet must be resorted to, with all sort of gentleness and attention; the matter stated, the substance given in, in writing; opinion and direction rather asked than resolution declared on their part; lamentation rather than blame. Honour and principle are never the worse for being conducted with address. Two things—not to resign, not to abandon the ground of dispute. With good conduct the whole may yet be gained—points, office, all. But then the temper to be used, in my mind, ought not to extend to the Irish job system. You can only defend yourselves by open avowed unappeasable war against that, as long as no temperaments of any kind are held out; when they are, their value will be considered. I shall write, I think, a note to this purpose to Lord Fitzwilliam and the Duke of Portland. I wrote last night a *threnodia* to the Chancellor; but I did not enter into any particular whatever: it would have been quite useless. He is a very able good-humoured friendly man; and for himself truly no great

jobber, but where a job of patronage occurs, *quanquam ipsâ in morte tenetur*. For in the article of death he would cry, "Bring the job!" Good God! to think of jobs in such a moment as this! Why, it is not vice any longer: it is corruption run mad. Thank you for the account of the few saved at Bois le Duc—Pichegru has more humanity than we have. Why are any of these people put into garrison places? It is premeditated and treacherous murder. If an emigrant governor was indeed appointed, a better thing could not be done. Then we should hear of a defence: it would, indeed, be a novelty; and one would think, for that reason, would be recommended. But cowardice and treachery seem qualifications; and punishment is amongst the *artes perditæ* in the old governments. I am very miserable—tossed by public upon private grief, and by private upon public. Oh! have pity on yourselves! and may the God, whose counsels are so mysterious in the moral world (even more than in the natural), guide you through all these labyrinths. Do not despair! if you do, work in despair. Feel as little and think as much as you can: correct your natural constitutions, but don't attempt to force them.

Adieu, adieu!

Yours ever

EDMUND BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Diary, p. 333.)

October 28, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR

I am in a state of mind as near complete despair as a man can be in; yet whilst there remains the faintest possibility of doing good, I think you, whose duty it is to act and who have vigour of body and mind sufficient to that duty, ought to omit no rational means of removing the evil which presses the most nearly, and is the most within your reach. A mediator is wanted in this

business. I doubt whether you are exactly in that situation. I think the Chancellor is. I feared he might be too much influenced by the jobbery of his Irish connections, particularly that of Douglas. But I rather think I wronged him. I have heard from him, and by the strain he writes in I am sure he wishes this rupture to be made up in some proper way, as you and I do. Now I apprehend he may be a little crippled in this business of a useful go-between, if there be not some confidence shown to him by our friends. I just throw out this hint, not being able to say much more than what I have already troubled you with at great length. How comes it that I have heard nothing of Dundas in this business, no more than if no such thing existed? and yet he must certainly tell for a great deal in it. I know this affair can never come to any sort of amicable conclusion, whilst they treat the matter in dispute exactly in the spirit and upon the principles of ministers of adverse courts (and very adverse courts too) debating on a matter in negotiation, and not as members of the same Cabinet Council and servants of the same King. The order of the questions and all this fencing tends to keep alive the hostility. There is something of the worst tendency imaginable in the whole mode of their carrying on business. God bless you!

Ever yours

EDMUND BURKE.

On 17 Dec. a further stage in the reconstruction of the ministry was reached by the appointment of Earl Spencer as First Lord of the Admiralty, and of Earl Fitzwilliam as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Spencer was succeeded as Privy Seal by Lord Chatham, who was thus happily withdrawn from active military operations. As Fitzwilliam's appointment did not actually take effect till he landed in Ireland, 5 Jan. 1795, the patched-up arrangement of the difficulty remained for some weeks undisturbed.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 53.)

BECONSFIELD, *Dec. 22, 1794.*

MONDAY NIGHT.

MY DEAR SIR,

I make no apology at all when I recommend any thing at all about Business or about men thro' you to your friends and fellow-ministers. Indeed it is in general (though I would not be too troublesome) the channel thro' which I should most wish my thoughts to go. If you do not see the thing to be right or the person proper, or the ground [be] preoccupied, why, you will do nothing, or they will do nothing—and I shall be satisfied, having done my Duty and taking it for granted that you, on your part, do yours as fairly and at least as wisely. I have much respect and value for Lord Spenser, and I believe he thinks so. I am sure our Navy is our all; and much will depend upon good and apt subordinate Instruments. Some people I know consider them as nothing; but I am not of that opinion: I consider them as every thing, or nearly so. It is I fancy of moment that Lord Spenser should have a private secretary skilful if possible in the naval trade. If he is not equipped—I have a friend whom I would recommend. It is Captⁿ Creyk¹—a man of excellent Character in his profession; of good Service; well educated and very intelligent. I think such a man would be an acquisition to Lord Spenser. He has frequently applied for professional employment—but without the shadow of professional Objection, and with (on the contrary) expressions of approbation, he has not got it.

May I beg you to recommend your old acquaintance and my worthy friend and relation M^r Edm^d. Nagle² to Lord Spenser's protection; and that he may not lose any way that he has made under Lord Chatham.

When you please to retire for a day or two, here is a place not incommodious to you. You will find your friends fewer by the

¹ Richard Creyk, Captain R.N., 1782.² Knighted 1795, afterwards Admiral and K.C.B.

dreadful but just act of God ; but though miserable, they are still not without sincerity and feeling for those whom they ought to love and value.

Ever most truly your unhappy friend

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. IV. 251.)

December 30, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR

I send this to you by Fred. North¹. Many months have not passed since I was in hopes of sending you another sort of assistance than you are likely to receive from any hints I can give you. I was in hopes of sending to you a person who would have fought under you in this cause with a pure and ardent zeal, with powerful abilities, and with a manly fortitude that I am convinced never was exceeded, and I am persuaded was rarely matched amongst the sons of men. But just as he was on the point of demonstrating to the world what was so well known to me and to a few others, it pleased the Great Disposer, who gave to him those powers and dispositions, to determine upon some other sphere for their employment. Well! with this loss I have not lost all interest in the fate of all human concerns. No less than the whole of these depend on the issue of the present counsels. You have my most ardent vows for an auspicious beginning and a happy close to this session. You remember the point I pressed to you with so much earnestness at our parting. I should not have urged it with all that importunity, if I did not know that you and your colleagues must meet several who will hold to you a very different language. I am apprehensive that resort will be had to those trivial maxims of an improvident timidity, which some call prudence, to recommend to you a conduct opposite to that which, with all the liberty of a sincere friendship,

¹ Hon. Frederick North, afterwards 5th Earl of Guilford and celebrated as a bibliophile. He was sent to Corsica as Secretary of State under Sir Gilbert Elliot.

I recommend to all of you. Depend upon it that the party, whether it be opposition or ministry, which is driven to act upon the *defensive* in this session, will be ruined. Arms are not yet taken up; but virtually you are in a civil war. You are not people of differing opinions in a public council;—you are enemies, that must subdue or be subdued, on the one side or the other. If *your* hands are not on your swords, their knives will be at your throats. There is no medium,—there is no temperament,—there is no compromise with Jacobinism.

This is an unfortunate state of things; but it is your state, and you must conform to it. There will be a change of tone. Some designs, without being at all abandoned, will appear to be postponed. But all this is, on the one hand, to abate all salutary alarm on your side, and on the other hand, it is to attack you with the greatest skill. The country is not yet lost to you; but it is in a very dubious state. My clear opinion is that if you excite a spirit in the people, which in part at least is ever the effect of art and management, it will carry you through every thing. If you do not, you will sink under the very weight of your own works. You and the people you neglect will together have the lot of those who will choose to go to sleep on the edge of Dover cliff. The public is on the very point of ruin, when the government of the country is dishonoured by its tribunals. When the laws protect those who conspire against those laws, and when there is an army at hand to support them in all their enterprises, what *ordinary* measures, taken out of the stores of daily routine, will suffice for our preservation? As yet the house is not fallen, but it is completely undermined. If a spirit is once raised and (what is very material) employed in its first fervours, such an association as was set on foot in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, with scrutinies, tests, and abjurations, *suited to these times and these occasions*, instead of the old nonsense, may be adopted with success. After the revolution such an association was copied from the proceedings in the time of Elizabeth. God forbid that we should attempt to be wise by precedent. But settled governments have not the bold resources of new experimental systems. They must have some eye to example, if it were only to encourage those whom every new measure in their own

defence frightens more than all the new measures of attack adopted by their adversaries. But sure I am, that we ought to approach as nearly as our circumstances will permit to the decisive character of the new enemy we have to contend with abroad and at home. If something of this kind is not done, and attended with a correspondent course of systematic action, associations of another kind will by and by be formed, and by the irresistible cry of the people you will be forced to deliver yourselves, your king and your country, under the false and insidious name of peace, bound hand and foot to the mercy of the united Jacobins of France and England. Through the whole session, from the sounding of the first trumpet, I recommend to you to hold, not only a firm and resolved language, but a high criminating tone, as far as the forms of Parliament will permit. I have much on my mind upon this subject, particularly on your manner of conducting the debate, so as to put it into a tactic for the mutual support of each other. But North's chaise is at the door. I rejoice to find him employed. I wish he may be able to find his kingdom in the map of the British territories. Corsica may not be able to preserve Italy, but without it I should give Italy for lost. Why, instead of Corsica, is not North sent to Rome, to form an Italian league, and to raise an army in the Ecclesiastic States (not yet exhausted with levies) for the defence of that island in the first instance, and after, to throw in wherever it may be wanted? May God preserve you all in the great conflict you are to go through, both at home and abroad!

Ever, ever yours

EDM. BURKE.

A better year—may we have it—*melioribus opto auspiciis*.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 55.)

Jan^y 7, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

Do not think I call for an answer when I trouble you with a line : I know too well the value of your time ; and the dreadfully critical nature of the affairs you are engaged in. Our friend Dr Walker King, at breakfast this morning, read me an account of your speech¹ from a paper called the *Sun*. I know that none of these reporters do you justice. But here I think they have done better than usual. As to you, you have done just *what* you ought ; and just *as* you ought—with a full possession of yourself, firm, rational, manly, with a proper notice of the foolish declamations and low calumnies against you, and with a just animadversion, a proper scorn of them. You have hit the true Method of defence ; and in my opinion have done the adversary, (who sets himself at *you*, and who aims at nothing less than your life, property and fame, and that pretty declaredly) more harm, and yourself more good, than by any speech, amongst the many good ones, you have made in your life. I think he must have sunk under it. But do not think that he will not rise again and try his old arts—that he will most assuredly ; and he will get his and your friend²—(a name you very properly resolve to hang up in the townhall for a while) to retract his moderation and join him in the attack. I expect others will support you as they ought to do. But be that as it will ; be as true to yourself as hitherto you have been ; and others will want support more from you than you from them. Nothing pleased me more in your speech than your developing the little arts and schemes of policy and the mean spirit and genius of the intrigue w^{ch} gives rise

¹ On Sheridan's motion for the repeal of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, 5 Jan. 1795.

² Sheridan in the speech referred to had called attention to the breach now declared between Windham and Fox. "He recollected that on a former occasion he (W.) would not give up the title of 'friend' till his right hon. friend had first given him a hint for that purpose. He had not waited for the hint : he had now renounced the title."

to the proceedings and speeches against you. Keep this always in view, and your mind tense and alert with regard to these attacks, to which, to your infinite honour, you will be more subject than any other man. When anything comes on about Parliamentary reform, or you foresee it, pray let me know, that I may unlauderdale myself. Will you condescend to read a few lines from me; and add your own Testimony that in our long acquaintance you never found me bold enough to undertake for myself, or submissive enough to the *Wills* of others, to be *assiduously* active, as the Lauderdale style expresses it, in what is greatly miscalled Parliamentary reform?

Pray stick to the Method of detecting the low policies and stratagems which characterise Sheridanism. This is the right handle. You are become, by being Patron of the emigrants, enough of a French Chevalier, to be pleased with the praises of any Lady, even of one old Lady. Mrs Burke is quite happy about your speech. We were in truth, all of us, very anxious about you.

Have you read D'Yvernois' pamphlet¹ about the Revolution of Geneva? I don't know whether it be translated; if not, with a proper preface, it ought to be, and printed and circulated at the Charge of Gov^t.

Don't make any further apology about Juries. It is the Business and the Privilege of the H. of C. to examine Courts of Judicature in every part of their constitution and conduct.

Ever, my d^r Sir,

most faithfully y^r unhappy friend

EDM. BURKE.

The preliminaries to the final stage of the Hastings Trial began on 13 Jan. 1795, with the appointment of a committee to inspect the journals as to the mode of giving judgment. The trial ended with the acquittal on 23 April.

¹ *Réflexions sur la Guerre*. The author, François D'Ivernois, was knighted by George III, 11 May 1796.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 57.)

Jan^y 8, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

God knows what a bitterness I feel in my mouth in returning to my Indian Vomit. But the very being of publick Justice, perhaps of Parl^t. itself, is concerned in it. The Lords cannot go on with^t a Syllabus. It is a thousand to one they will get that Rogue Cowper¹ to make one. One is preparing on our side, which, as it goes on, I wish printed. Pray talk to Francis and to Mr Pitt about it—to the Speaker of course. I have written to him. I should hate to be obliged to pass my last hours in discrediting the supreme Judicature of this Country. But this, if in some tolerable way they do not do their Duty, I must do, and even leave it as a Legacy, if I should not live to finish it. Justice is better than Judicature; and I see no one publick good that can arise from handing down you and me and others our colleagues (to say nothing of the House) in the infamous Light of false accusers—in order to save the credit of Thurlow and Eyre and Buller &c. &c. &c.

I think the Lords had better be got to make another adjournment (for reasons relative to themselves) whilst our Syllabus is printing. I know you have little time—but I only wish you to help to put things into train.

Various things have occurred to me relative to Sheridan's attack on you. I may send some of them to you, as hints you may improve on if you think it worth your while.

Adieu, God bless you. Y^r ever unhappy friend

EDM. BURKE.

¹ Probably Henry Cowper, Assistant to the Clerk of the Parliaments, son of General Spencer Cowper, the poet's cousin.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 59.)

[*Jan.* 1795.]

Sampson! The Philistins be upon thee!

Depend upon it that if some speedy, well combined and steadily executed Measures are not adopted at this Crisis, you will be overpowr'd by a Storm of Petitions from all Parts of England, praying in a mixture of supplication and menace that we may be delivered over bound hand and foot to the mercy of the united Jacobins of England and France. That union is no longer problematical; nor can we be any longer Lulled with the hope, that property is a security, either against passion or delusion.

In my poor opinion, when the Norwich petition¹ is brought up, the House ought to come to a strong and decisive resolution on the subject; not to impeach the right of Petition, but effectually to put a Bar to the Hope of success to all Petitions of that kind. The Resolution ought to be declaratory of a steady opinion and determination that no part of Europe, and least of all this part of it, is safe, whilst any power under any Name exists in France professing the principles and executing the Views and actuated by the policy which has made the predominant Faction there so mischievous to Religion, Laws, Manners, Commerce and the common Liberty and independence of all Nations and all Governments; to state the loss of Holland and the utter ruin to all the Commerce and power of G. B. from that loss, and the impossibility, whilst that and the other places ravish'd from our Allies remain in their hands, for any sort of secure peace to exist; and that what they have seized upon by force, never can be won from them by supplication.

Will they give these places up without an equivalent? What equivalent have any of the Allies to offer except ourselves? What is our equivalent? The places we have taken in the West Indies for the absolute security of our Colonies. What in that case shall hinder them from doing, what they have threatened and are well able to

¹ Against the war, presented 5 Feb. 1795.

execute—that is to pour an hundred thousand Negroes and men of Colour into our Islands, which against that kind of force could not make an hour's resistance? I don't open this or the other Topics at length. An hint is enough for you.

Why should not the two houses prepare a Manifesto, whether in form of a Representation to the Crown or otherwise? What signifies the precedent? Whilst this is in debate, both Houses ought to be shut. The more unusual and the more alarming the better. Nothing but security can do us mischief.

“Nothing to us what Gov^t prevails in France.”—No certainly not; but it is of infinite consequence to us, what sort of *Robbery* prevails in France, and what the genius, temper, policy and means of that *Robbery* are.

I had thrown down many thoughts, in a very loose way, when I heard of the loss of Holland; a thing which however it was plain enough *must* happen. But I have for some days thrown aside the Paper, being very sure that my Ideas would not all be suited to the Temper that prevails at present—and that something of an odd but necessary composition of more fear and more courage would be necessary to give them any sort of Effect.

Indeed you are, all; you are eminently threaten'd with their Guillotines. When Sheridan makes you responsible, it is not for what you have done as Minister—but for your Votes as a Member of Parl^t, before you ever were in Office. Our Constitution cannot make you responsible for this. It must be one of his Revolutionary Tribunals—“there,” says he, “sophistry and influence cannot save you.” No, unquestionably; nor law, nor justice neither. I have thought on what I wrote to you in the beginning of the Session. I am still in the same opinions. I don't sign my name, lest you should think yourself obliged to answer—which these hints don't require or perhaps deserve. Adieu, God direct you all. You are in a new way—and your New Wine cannot do in the Old Leathern Bottles.

Is the French Fleet at L'Orient? I have been there. With the Force you have at Falmouth, by crossing a little Country you may burn them in the Harbour.

On 18 Feb., after a cabinet dinner, Windham's *Diary* tells of a lengthy discussion "on the important and delicate crisis formed by the last letters of Lord Fitzwilliam, which the Duke of Portland had showed to me at St. James's." The arrangement, whereby Fitzwilliam went to Ireland deprived of the power to carry out those changes which he had authorised his friends there to expect, had in fact broken down, just as Burke had foreseen that it would. He had landed on a Sunday and on the Wednesday following dismissed John Beresford¹, a man who, in Fitzwilliam's own words spoken to the House of Lords after his return, "filled a situation greater than that of the Lord Lieutenant," and with whom "if he had connected himself, it would have been connecting himself with a person under universal heavy suspicions and subjecting his government to all the opprobrium and unpopularity attendant upon his mal-administration." This was not the spirit in which a coalition government could be conducted, and it was apparently through Windham (in a private letter from him to Fitzwilliam's secretary, Lord Milton, about 2 Feb.) that the Lord Lieutenant was first informed of the view which Pitt took of his action².

EARL FITZWILLIAM TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37875, f. 1.)

DUBLIN CASTLE, *March 1st '95.*

SIR

I had the honor of receiving your letter of the 24th ult : expressing your wish for M^r Grattan's presence in England, but not specifying that of any other member of that cabinet which has unanimously reprobated generally the measures of my administration, and on that account has recall'd me. I have not recommended to

¹ Second son of the Earl of Tyrone; his office, First Commissioner of Revenue, conveys no idea of the power he wielded under Pitt's administration.

² Fitzwilliam's *Second Letter to Lord Carlisle*, p. 14.

Mr Grattan to take the journey, but to wait till it is made the unanimous request of that cabinet that he should do so. I have the honor to be, with great respect,

Sir, your most obed. humble ser^t

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

WINDHAM TO EARL FITZWILLIAM.

(Add. MS. 37875, f. 5.)

HILL ST^a. *March 5th 1795.*

MY LORD,

I have received your Excellency's letter of the 1st Inst: and am sorry to find that by an act of zeal, hasty perhaps and injudicious, but certainly well-intended, I have exposed myself to a reception which acts of that sort are apt at times to meet with.

With respect to disapprobation of measures, I know of none, to which your Excellency can allude, except an opinion, which I cannot but distinctly avow, that a great part of your Excellency's measures have been in direct opposition to what I had understood to have been agreed upon, either directly or by implication, in the conversation which took place in Downing Street, a little previous to your Excellency's departure; I mean particularly in the appointment of Mr W. Ponsonby, the appointment of Mr G. Ponsonby, the removal of Mr Beresford, and in the bringing forward the Catholick question, so far as your Excellency approved of, or was concerned in, that measure, before a communication could be had with this country.

If in this opinion I have the misfortune to differ with your Excellency, I have the consolation, I believe, of agreeing with every other person who was present at that conversation.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,

Your Excellency's most obedient Humble servant

W. WINDHAM.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 61.)

March 6 [1795].

MY DEAR SIR,

I beg you to return to me the two letters which I put into your hands last night—as I must answer them by the unfaithful post of this—that my correspondant may have my thoughts after the previous perusal of Messers Lees¹ and Shawe². What answer am I to give about the Catholick Colleges? I have not yet seen the D. of Portland. I have on that subject, as on that of the Protestant Schools, had much serious talk with the dismounted Grattan and his friend Forbes. Our ideas were in perfect union, but Cooke³, Lees, Hamilton⁴, and Griffiths⁵ will be better heard than we on this subject, or on any subject. I have long groaned at seeing that great Kingdom delivered over to such hands. God bless you.

Ever y^r unhappy friend

EDM. BURKE.

I have had, in two days, four hours conversation with Mr Dundas, who heard me with a great deal of kindness and good Temper. I am sure that what I said to him (which is said to Mr Pitt also thro' him) was founded [on] a just observation of Facts and upon no grossly misunderstood principles of policy, though coming thro' the most imperfect organ in the world. I am sure it pointed to the security of Mr Pitt's power, to w^h there is not a man in this Kingdom more inclined than myself. This I know, that if he makes it the principle of his Admⁿ not to *gain* men, but to *ruin* those who being aggregated to him seem to deviate from the exact path he prescribes; and if he goes on (at the advice of the stupidest and most interested of mankind) to construe every equivocal appearance, owing to

¹ Probably John Lees, Secretary to the Irish Post Office.² Probably Robert Shaw, Accountant-General of the Post Office.³ Edward Cooke, Irish Under-Secretary, Military Department.⁴ Sackville Hamilton, Irish Under-Secretary, Civil Department.⁵ Perhaps Joseph Griffiths, Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.

temper, negligence and unskilful management, into overt acts of a settled design to subvert his power, He will thus *himself* subvert that power. You are never hereafter to look for strength by *junction* except here and there a scatter'd individual: and for every one you gain you lose two. I have said much, and my postscript is longer than my Letter, but there is an Iliad of woe approaching.

The three letters of Burke to Mrs Crewe which follow doubtless refer to this affair, but their exact dates and order are uncertain.

BURKE TO MRS CREWE.

(Add. MS. 37483, f. 65.)

[*March 1795?*]

M^{rs} Burke, my dear Madam, has been employed by me the greater part of this day in copying some Papers. She is fatigued and she desires me to answer your Note. She has slept ill for some Nights past. For my part, Rest had in a manner forsaken me for a good while, till last night; when, I thank God, I had as much sleep as I pleased. To say the truth, I did not think it possible that after my great domestick blow I should ever have felt pain and anxiety from any other Cause. But I did not calculate rightly. For a year past, and longer, I have done as much perhaps as ever man did to bring and to keep people together. But I have been unfortunate. All the means of conciliation I have used have become so many causes of contention. In that contention, I am certain, I have had no intentional share; as certain, as that I have had my full share in the Punishment. A great man may say, that this too is poetick Justice; and it may be so. I am little disposed to attack others, and not much more so to defend myself. I have lived; and now I have nothing to do but to die.

The Gentleman you mention to have seen at L^y P.'s has always had a very great share in my esteem. He did me the honour to call at Nerot's Hotel in my absence. I pity him very much. I am quite

sure he always acts on principle. But it is a most unfortunate thing, when, without either personal Breach or party Hostility, an opinion of Duty leads a man to execute a sentence of Punishment on a man of good Character, with whom he has lived in terms of Amity, how deserved soever the punishment may be. But every man will judge best for himself. It was in a manner but the other day, and before I knew that L^d Mⁿⁱ would go, that I spoke of Pelham as the properest man in the world to go Secretary to the illustrious Culprit who is now coming hither under an accusation; and such are the Revolutions of the world, that he now takes the Secretary's place forfeited under the accusation. The world is much above my understanding. As to the proceedings about the marriage, I wish every thing had looked more auspiciously. What delays the bride²? An hundred ardent Vows are uttered for an Eastern Gale. Is Pichegru's passport necessary? Cannot a Prince get so much as a Wife without the leave of Democracy? I suppose this dreadful case stuns all the great men into the most serious recollection—and the Prince is retired to Kempshot to meditate on this great change. Has he seen the Stadholder? Dionysius is at Corinth. Well! they all amaze me,—Princes, Dukes, Marquises, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretaries of State. My heart is sick; my stomach turns; my head grows dizzy. The world seems to me to reel and stagger. The Crimes of Democracy and the madness and folly of Aristocracy alike frighten and confound me. The only refuge is in God, who sees thro' all these mazes. Adieu! God bless you ever.

E. B.

¹ George Damer, Viscount Milton, afterwards 2nd Earl of Dorchester. Fitzwilliam was in the odd position of having a son and a chief secretary each of them styled Viscount Milton.

² The Prince of Wales' bride, Caroline of Brunswick. She left Brunswick 30 Dec. 1794, but the squadron sent to meet her had to return, and she stayed at Hanover till 28 March, arriving in England 5 April. The marriage took place on the 8th.

BURKE TO MRS CREWE.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 67.)

[Endorsed, 13 Mar. 1795.]

You write to me, my dear Madam, as if I were an Enemy to conciliation. It happens to be the very reverse. I am not only favourable to it; but the only man, who, with as many Members of the Cabinet as I could touch, moved Heaven and Earth to procure it. Don't think to persuade me of the necessity of conciliation. I *am* persuaded of it—and I think it yet possible, if I am listen'd to; but because I know I shall not be listen'd to, I do not think it possible, at least not possible for me. What Ladies may do I know not. I do know that they have many Blandishments and many charms which it would be ridiculous for an old man, or an old woman such as I may be called, to attempt. For God's sake do what you please and what you [can]. I have written my Ideas to the D. of Devon, to shew the D. of Port^d if he pleases. To be sure the thing may be settled. Let L^d F. be desired to stay in Ireland and Lord Camden to stay here. It may be settled in a moment. The rest is far above me. Let the Ladies take it—and God send them success.

BURKE TO MRS CREWE.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 63.)

[March 1795?]

My dear Madam, I came to Town but for a day; and I am just this instant setting off on my return. I thank you for the kindness of your last Note. I don't thank you indeed for it, as if it were anything new. It is habitual to you to be good and benevolent and condescending to the miserable. The number of that description seems to encrease every day and in every Class and situation of life. I feel from the bottom of my heart for the distresses that touch you

so much to the quick for our worthy friend at Burlington House¹. I read the part of your letter that regards him, at Lord F.'s—where I received it. He was exceedingly affected. So was Lady Fitzwilliam. But how either of the parties can do anything towards the alleviation of their common sufferings I know not. Lord F. assured me that he felt with the utmost Tenderness for what his old friend must suffer; that his heart towards him was exactly in its old place; that the change in their relation was a cause of great grief to him; but not of the smallest degree of resentment; that the Task he had to go through was one imposed upon him by the most Tyrannical necessity—and that if for private regards and feelings (which the world would construe into something a great deal worse) he was to abandon his Cause—he must not only forfeit his own Honour, but the Honour and Character of his friends, who had so nobly supported his Government, and indeed of the whole Kingdom of Ireland, that had shewn uncommon marks of confidence in him—that if he were to compromise in these points, no Englishman after him would be trusted by the honourable and disinterested part of that Country.—These things he reiterated with great sensibility, but with great Temper, over and over again—as indeed he had done at several other times. It is a woful situation of things; which time and events (that do more to bring matters to rights than all our endeavours) can alone rectifye. I must think that they who saw, step by step, this excellent man led to his own suicide, for such it is truly in a publick light, must be inexpressibly hard hearted not to have taken some measures to prevent him from inflicting that unheard of punishment, on his friend in the first instance, but in the end much more surely and much more severely upon himself. God bless you and forward all your wishes and labours for the wretched. They are in the Great Hotels, in the Pompous Colonnades, in the spacious Courts, in the Town Gardens, in the Titled Heads, and the Hearts covered with purple Honours—in great fortunes and in high offices—in what not outward shews of happiness; as well as in the Cottages of starving fugitives, which your kindness led you the other day to visit,—with this woful difference, that to the unhappy of the

¹ The Duke of Portland.

latter you may bring some relief—not to the former ; their sufferings are out of the reach of your Charity. The Kings are all gone out of Town. May heaven give us better days. Adieu, Adieu.

Put down Lady F. for a subscriber.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 69.)

WEDNESDAY [1 *Apr.* 1795]¹.

MY DEAR SIR,

The other Business naturally and properly occupies you, yet the honour of the House of Commons, and of ourselves, in our old pursuit of Hastings' delinquency cannot and ought not to escape you. I wish you would have a word with the Speaker today if possible on the Subject.

I am ever y^{rs} faithfully

EDM. BURKE.

¹ Endorsed, April 2, 1795.

CHAPTER V.

ASSISTANCE TO THE EMIGRÉS.

THE story of the failure of the Quiberon Bay expedition (27 June—21 July 1795), the most substantial effort made by Pitt's government to carry out the war policy advocated by Burke and Windham, cannot be told in the space available here, nor do we find references to it in this correspondence occupying so great a place as we might expect¹. The apportionment of blame however for that failure, and the consideration of the fatal defects of temper and tact in the leaders of the expedition, would not help us to understand Burke's attitude towards the war so much as do his letters upon topics, such as the assistance to be given to refugees in England, which might seem of comparatively little importance. Burke evidently distrusted Puisaye's ability, probably doubted his honesty, but it was not these misgivings that drove him to despair. It was the whole spirit in which the British government was acting. Pitt's attitude was that of being willing to spend money on the war when he felt that he could justify the expense, as a good investment, before the cool judgement of the House of Commons. Burke wished to see the country inflamed with a whole-hearted indignation and a partisanship in the affairs of the French that would have left it only open to the ministry to justify what they had not done, not what they had done, to push on the war. His passionate feeling for the French monarchists was as different from Pitt's cool calculation as from Sheridan's sympathy with the revolutionaries.

¹ There is however in the Windham Papers an abundance of material which will doubtless be used, in conjunction with the Puisaye Papers also in the Museum, to illustrate this episode. See also Pelham's MS. Diary for interesting discussions of the scheme when it was originally proposed in Feb. 1794.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 71.)

June 9 [1795].

MY DEAR SIR,

I have said so much to so little purpose to our friend Elliot¹ about the scheme of the new Transportation of the unhappy fugitive Clergy of France—that I don't know how I can justifie myself in troubling you again on the Subject. But I am so strongly impressed with the mischief of this new exile of the *Reliquiae Danaum* that I cannot forbear once more to warn you against that measure, both on their account and on yours. At this moment the popular mind is in a very unsettled state—and I am as sure as I live, that a vast migration, thro' the heart of the Kingdom, of strangers that will be consider'd as no better than Vagrants, Enemies, and rivals of the Poor in the Bounty of the Rich, will produce an ill effect, that no ordinary consideration of military convenience can possibly counter-balance. I say nothing on the œconomical part of the Question, though it is evident that it will cost twice as much to have these unfortunate people twice as ill off as they are at present—where they are fitted to the situation, and the vicinage reconcil'd to them with all sort of good will and mutual accommodation. This is a publick Hospital, and applied to that use. I doubt as much the Justice as the policy of turning people out of your Hospital, when you have once possessed them of it. Charity has its own Justice, and its own Rules, as well as any other part of human intercourse; and if I give a Cottage to a poor man to live in, I have no more right to turn him out of it than if I had let it to him for Rent. There is nothing in these things voluntary but the beginnings of them. But be that as it may—where in the world can you arrange them? I hear of Bolsover Castle. This is like the D. of Portland's generosity. But is there at Bolsover (which after all will be a new Exile to these wretches) the market of all kinds which exists at Winchester? Excuse me, my dear friend,

¹ William Elliot, of Wells.

this importunity. I believe you will be the first to repent this Measure.

I am ever most faithfully and affection^{ly} y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

What the Devil are you all doing about the Prince¹? If you are not to consider him as a Prince, and keep him as such, by an honourable establishment of a Court—there is no reason why you should give him anything on his private and personal merits. What is a Prince with^t people of distinction about him? If he were willing to give up this Establishment (and I am afraid he is but too ready to do it) he ought not to be permitted so to do. Fatal! fatal Measure! Put the *animal*, if you will, to short allowance. But for God's sake, save the Monarchy if you can; which (neither in the possession nor succession) can be anything, but by its attendance. The D. of York may as well be commander-in-chief with^t a company of Soldiers, as a King or P. of Wales what they are without a Court. It ought not to go beyond decorum. But that ought to be. He is not, and cannot be, as Mr F[ox] and Mr S[heridan] sometimes represent him—a Gentleman. He is a prince or he is nothing. If you Ministers are firm, the H. of Commons may be brought to reason—and the Prince may, by suitable means, be put out of the reach of future Debts. Why not put his Houses, Goods &c. out of the reach of Executions? They are purchased by the publick and are the publick property; and no private man, no not the Prince, ought to have a power of alienating them. Use—as much as you please and even a little abuse—but no Dominion. Why not make it an act of Bankruptcy in a Dealer—a misdemeanour in any other, to credit him, except by an order under his own hand, countersigned by his great officers? For his private expences let him have an handsome privy purse. Abuse let there be; but let there be limits to the Abuse. These restraints are no humiliations. Just the contrary. They are a part, a necessary part, a noble part, of greatness. They are only the meanest beings in the Community whose Will is not worthy of

¹ The subject of providing for the payment of the Prince of Wales' debts was before the House of Commons from the 1st to the 17th of June.

a Rule.—I really do not know what state these things are in. In my poor Judgment the plan first stated by M^r Pitt was the best—and there was then a Majority sufficient to carry it. Now all seems at sea again. Let the allowance be what it will, a decent Establishment ought to be kept up. So far from being necessarily expensive it will lessen the general charge.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 73.)

HALF PAST 10. SATURDAY EVEN,

[? 27 June 1795.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A thousand and a thousand thanks for your good news¹, which would indeed have effaced a thousand Neglects, if any Neglects there could have been on your part. There were none however. But if there were, sin again, and again make the same attonement.

I pray to God that this Victory, opportune and important as you well observe it is, may be attended with all its natural consequences. Whatever others may be, I am not one of those who chicane about the good they are about to partake of. I wish Mons^r Puissaye every kind of advantage and glory possible. God knows how much his success is near my heart. If I have been mistaken in my man, O! pray let the mistake be attributed to its proper Cause, and its proper author. I have told you the exact truth in my Letter; and I should be sorry you thought me the Instrument of the discontent of others. The Enquiries were made by *myself* of my *own* motion, and were the fruits of my *own* extreme anxiety—and not the suggestions of any human Creature. If the facts I went on are false, and that this Gentleman has ever distinguished himself in a military Capacity, or had high rank in the army, and was not a Democate in the first Assembly and afterwards, and was not a Brissotine Federalist, acting under Wimpfen—then I am mistaken in my Materials—but I faithfully assure you that the enquiries were my *own*—and all the conclusions which gave rise to my apprehensions my *own* entirely

¹ Probably Lord Bridport's victory off L'Orient, 22 June.

and absolutely. It is three months (if you will recollect) since I was full of alarm and apprehension on reading the extraordinary manifesto which he thought proper to print, abusing and insulting all the French officers of distinction on account of "Leur triste médiocrité." For God's sake therefore, my dear Sir, put the saddle on the right Horse, and do not be provoked by my folly to think that any persons are so unnaturally bent on their own destruction as to wish ill success to this Expedition, in which their last hopes are involved. Don't think that even I can wish it ill success. My being is hardly more important to me, than¹ the good Event of this operation. My reasonings may be, and I suppose they are, since they differ from yours, perfectly absurd; but I am unfortunately but too capable of original and idiopathick absurdity, and do not want to have it infused into me, or to fall into the follies of others by sympathy. Indeed, indeed, you are mistaken; and though it would grieve me beyond description, to be for a moment justly under your displeasure, it would grieve me infinitely more, that I should be the unhappy means of others incurring it unjustly. I confess I did feel uneasy when I found a *conjunto expedition*, made for landing by force in an Enemies Country, strongly fortified and, *near the Coast* (as I always understood), highly disaffected to our Cause, under the Conduct of one of whose military Capacity I never heard any account whatsoever: because I always consider'd this sort of expedition to demand very considerable abilities, much beyond others. But pray, again excuse a weakness, arising not from a wish for ill success, but from a too great anxiety for good success. Receive my hearty congratulations on what is past; my ardent wishes for what is depending; and ten thousand thanks for your wonderful exertions in this, the best of all causes—in which you have not shewn more regard to the general Interest, than humanity to many meritorious individuals. Adieu. God bless your future endeavours—forgive me my weakness, and believe me ever devotedly yours

EDM. BURKE.

I shall soon write to you a word or two about poor Haviland.

¹ MS. that.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 75.)

30 *July* [1795].

MY DEAR SIR,

I am at the Dregs of the Vessel, and I must drink what is in it. How I shall break this dreadful affair¹ to the poor worthy Creature, now the only remains of my family, I cannot conceive. She is delicate in the extreme, and far gone with Child. If I could conceal it from her by any arts of my own, her Mother-in-law would not suffer it. In other respects the times are woful indeed. I suppose the utmost I hear is but too true. Adieu! thanks for your most friendly attentions. Nothing could be more accommodating than Dundas. He is always so. But the thing is not with him.

Ever y^r afflicted friend

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 77.)

BECONSFIELD. *Sept.* 4, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is the vexatious Privilege of Ministers, among many other Privileges not very pleasant, to be teized with applications. A man like me, so many years in affairs and out of power, either directly or by his friends runs up an arrear of kindness received by many and never returned. I told you of a weakness I felt after *as* near a loss in the West Indies, I don't say nearer, about poor Cuppage². There is one way, and I believe it is somewhat in your power, to keep him from that expedition, which is to give him an employment in the Barrack Line as one of Delancey's³ deputies. It is only during the War. It is commonly given to Officers; and

¹ The death of Major Thomas Haviland, 45th Regiment. He had married Mary Cecilia French, daughter of Burke's sister Julia.

² Captain (afterwards Colonel) William Cuppage, Royal Artillery, a second cousin of Burke's.

³ Major-General Oliver Delancey, Barrack-Master-General.

I believe formerly much to artillery Officers. No other class seem to have naturally better pretensions to it—and Cuppage's Pretensions are as good as any. He is of long standing,—and much service, particularly in the long siege of Gibraltar, where he distinguished himself and received a wound, the cure of which was long and his suffering great—the recovery was indeed almost a Miracle. Can you do anything in this way? If you can, I am sure you will; for it is a good natured act and for a worthy person, and will make an old and attached friend of yours, sinking under age and calamity, a little more quiet in Mind.

I am ever, My d^r Sir,

Most cordially yours

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 79.)

Sept. 15, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

Though I talked to you of Botany Bay¹, I said not a word about Penn or Wycomb. I really thought that as the Troops who were to be barracked at Winchester had been ordered on foreign service, that the project of the new exile of the French Clergy had been laid aside. Even if necessary, it would have been expensive in a great degree; vexatious enough, and in its political Effects on the publick mind not a little critical. But you were not got to London before I received a Letter from a M^r Anderson, a clergyman at Penn², whose Observatory and Experimental apparatus I wished much to show you. I do not know whether in official Course I ought to apply to you, or to the Duke of Portland, for relief. But I thought it best to write to both of you. I have sent M^r Anderson's Letter to the Duke. Some Barrack Master, as we are told, has come, just as

¹ Possibly this refers to Lewis, the guardsman, tried for riot at Charing Cross. On 8 Nov. Windham wrote to the Lord Chancellor suggesting the commutation of his sentence to transportation for life, with a view to obtaining evidence against his supposed instigators; see Add. MS. 37875, f. 251.

² Rev. Benjamin Anderson, afterwards vicar of Penn.

if to mark quarters in an Enemies country. Not one word of consultation with the two Clergymen, or with Lord Curzon's steward, or with myself or any of the Farmers or Housekeepers of the parish. From ninety to an hundred Beds are put up, where the aged, infirm and healthy are all crow[d]ed together just like Prisoners of War, or Soldiers not averaging one and twenty years in a Barrack, without regard to propriety, convenience or common decency, to eat sleep and discharge the miserable necessities of Nature all in the same place, without common Room, eating place or Chappel. The parishioners, as you see by Mr Anderson's Letter, are not without apprehensions of contagion by having so many persons crowded together. I am not to state these things to you. They have no Firing, no Milk, no Butter, no Water, no Vegetables. Those who are denied Flesh meat near one half the year! This I admit is better than the Jacobin prison preparatory to the Guillotine. But these things cannot be mixed. An Hospitable House however straiten'd from necessity, is not to resemble a noisome and pestilential prison. I understand Wycomb prison is fitted up in the same manner. For God's sake, would it do any harm to consult me, and make me the Barrack Commissaries Aid de Camp in one Barrack in the Parish I live in, the other in my near neighbourhood?

Oh pray save us all!

Moore of Moorehall!

Free us entirely from this dreadful Visitation:

Or at least reduce their number to their accommodation!¹

¹ Adapted from the ballad of *Moore of Moore Hall and the Dragon of Wantley*:

"Oh save us, Moore of Moore-Hall
Thou peerless knight of these Woods
Do but slay this Dragon, who won't leave us a rag on;
We'll give thee all our Goods."

Or, more probably, from Henry Carey's burlesque opera, *The Dragon of Wantley* (1763):

"Oh save us all!
Moore of Moore-Hall!
Or else this cursed Dragon
Will plunder our Houses,
Our Daughters and Spouses,
And leave us the Devil a rag on."

I don't consider, I assure you, the expence I must be at to render their Captivity tolerable. It will be very great. But I shall endeavour to bear it. Why may they not be in London with the rest of their Brethren, to shift as they can? Short follies are the best—get off the Houses and sell the Beds as you can. Depend upon it, the saving will be great, even incurring expence as you have done. For God's sake look to this, and excuse the trouble I give you. For fourteen years I have struggled in vain to save India from oppression. Let me succeed for one poor Parish.

My dear Sir, ever affect^{ly} yours

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO DUKE OF PORTLAND.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 81.)

BECONSFIELD, *Oct.* 3, 1795.

MY DEAR LORD,

We are much obliged to our excellent friend M^{rs} Crewe and to your Grace for your early Care in preventing that severe alarm we must have felt, on thinking on any dreadful accident that had happen'd to her. Her loss would be great, not only to us, who want abundantly all sorts of consolations, but to thousands of the poor and necessitous, to whom she is so unwearied in her charitable Patronage. We cannot guess of what nature the accident was: but dreadful it must have been and truly alarming. This day the Post does not go from hence, but I send this by the Coach, that no time should be lost in shewing this incomparable person the interest we take in her. We beg your Grace, that you will yourself frank the enclosed to M^{rs} Crewe, or desire Mr J. King to do it, if your Grace is pressed in time. We are on every account much obliged to your Grace. You have thought of us in your absence, and our Table has

found the effects of your fruit Garden. Your Grace is not a person to be rich in anything for yourself alone.

The letter I wrote to your Grace was, as you rightly observe, formal and official, as to the Secretary of State, because I expressed the opinions of other Parishioners as well as my own. Certainly I never thought that whatever was blameable in this cruel arrangement was the fault of your Grace or any other Minister. Nor were the second or third line of subordinates who executed it perhaps so much to blame. They considered it only as a common Barrack for soldiers, or a Jail for prisoners of War. In that light they did to their (*sic*) best of their Judgment: as to the Tradesmen employed, they looked for nothing but employment. I have since visited the House prepared for one hundred and fifty at Wycombe. It was the Antelope Inn. It is still a worse Habitation than that of Penn in every point of view. The Death of the Persons to be confined in it, and the effects of the contagion to others, I conceive quite certain. Very many of the Rooms to be so crowded are not above six foot three in height, and four or five of them have no communication at all with the open air; their miserable Windows opening into a close corridore. None of the Rooms are above seven foot high, as I conceive. There is no Room whatsoever to sit in, to read, to work or to assemble; no room to eat in; no Chappel. Since it has been bought on the part of Government, it need not be lost. It will make a tolerable Barrack; particularly if the Stables, turned into Bedchambers, be returned, which at little expence they may be, back to their old destination. Soldiers, who do not average five and twenty years old, who are taken from the Classes of Life most inured to hardship, and who at their exercises or at their amusements are almost always *sub Dio*, may find that a very tolerable place to turn into and sleep in, which would be no less than sorrow, disease and Death to old parochial Clergymen, many of them broken with infirmity and affliction, as a sedentary residence day and night, without any means of comfort, religious worship, study or occupation. I am quite sure that an additional allowance made to them, to find lodgings as they can in London, on all accounts, if they are removed from Winchester, would not amount to half the charge to Government incurred by this

dreadful Prison. I have the honour to be with the most affectionate and respectful attachment

My dear Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient and ever obliged unhappy old friend

EDM. BURKE.

M^{rs} Burke and William present their most respectful and grateful compliments.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 83.)

BECONSFIELD, *Oct.* 10, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just received a letter from King¹, who was Cornet in Loftus's Dragoons, that you have removed him from thence, and promoted him to a Lieutenancy in the 26th Reg^t Light Dragoons. I feel most exceedingly obliged to you for your Patronage to this young man, who, I am persuaded, will do no sort of discredit to it. He is very well liked in the Corps from which your kindness has transplanted him. His having obtained his first Commission by the means of your late friend, my dear Son, who, if it had pleased God to spare him, would have solicited your goodness for this Object, has made this promotion tenfold more pleasant to me. A thousand thanks therefore for your goodness. It is pouring some balm into an heart pierced with many wounds—whilst your own perhaps stands in want of some for what you feel in the same kind with me. Our publick Grievs are the same—as our principles and our Sentiments have always concurred.

M^{rs} Burke and William, and Laurence² desire their most sincere compliments; and believe me ever most truly and affectionately,

My dear Sir, your most faithful and obed^t humble ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

Nagle desires to be respectfully remember'd.

¹ Henry King, appointed Lieutenant, 26th Light Dragoons, 12 Aug. 1795.

² French Laurence, the civilian.

WINDHAM TO PITT.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 104.)

Oct. 16, '95.

MY DEAR SIR,

Though I have long seen and lamented the little disposition that there is, to give to the Royalist cause the sort of support which I should think necessary: of which I cannot but consider the late decision of the Cabinet as a new and unfortunate proof; yet there is one species of assistance, which I thought it was agreed to continue without abatement, during the continuance of the War. I mean that of arms, ammunition and money. Are we however doing any such thing? Independent of the decision which I have just been regretting, and which will have the effect, I fear, of lessening, in an immense proportion, the facility of our communication with Charette¹, there are no less than seven large enrolments of people, that may not be improperly called armies, the lowest being 8,000, and the highest 20, or 25, thousand, some² of which are in a situation to be supplied from the money sent from Monsieur, even if Monsieur should find the means of landing, and of taking that money with him. These have long represented their capacity and disposition to act, and to make important diversions, in favour of Charette, if they could be assisted by means, and those not very considerable ones, of assembling and putting their people in motion. The greatest part of these are under the conduct of people perfectly well known to us, and on whom entire reliance can be placed for a due application of any sums entrusted to them. Some of these persons are here; and for the others there [are] agents ready, on whom an equal reliance might be placed.

It becomes absolutely necessary to come to some resolution on this point. For, as it is, these persons are acting under a persuasion that no assistance, which this country can give them, of the sort

¹ François Athanase Charette de la Contrie, general of the royalists of La Vendée. He was executed at Nantes, 1796.

² *Sic.* ? none.

above described, and of which it could be sure of the application, would be withheld. To say the truth, I feel myself in a very unpleasant situation; for having uniformly contributed to give this persuasion, in some instances more directly, in others less so, if a contrary determination is taken, or if this is not certain of being acted upon, I must of necessity take the earliest steps to undeceive them, that I may not be instrumental in leading them into an error so fatal as that of expecting [aid] which they are not likely to receive. My own case however in this respect is little different from that of any other member of the Government; except inasmuch as I may have had with many of the parties more personal communication; for nothing that I have conveyed to them differs from that which is to be found in effect in various publick instruments, both written and printed. We are all therefore interested in coming to some explicit determination upon the subject; and interested likewise, that this should be done speedily, in order that no more precious time should be lost, of which there has been already a great deal, if the intention has been to give to the force still subsisting in Brittany all the effect of which I think [it to] be capable. I am the more anxious to understand distinctly what is intended with respect to their supplies, as from a letter of Mr Dundas, of which an account was given me yesterday, I am apprehensive that some idea is entertained of stopping in degree even the article of supply. Perhaps indeed that alone, seeing the great difficulty of conveying arms into the country, will do very little: and that if other means are not employed, that alone is hardly worth continuing.

Though the whole of the measure of evacuating differs so much from my ideas of what is expedient, so far as I am at present advised, that I [am] not very good counsel upon it, yet I cannot help suggesting, that even with the order for bringing away the troops, it may be very necessary to send out considerable supplies of forage, of fuel, and even of temporary buildings; as the wind may very possibly be such as to make a long interval before the embarkation, during which the troops for the want of those articles may be very grievously distressed, and yet communication with the shore not be so completely cut off as not to admit the articles being landed.

With this view, whatever is so sent out should be put as much as possible on board of small vessels.

I trouble you with this long letter, not knowing how soon you are to be back.

&c.

W. W.

PITT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 106.)

WALMER CASTLE, *Oct*^r 18, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received your Letter this Morning, and tho' I cannot but feel the Impossibility, under the present Circumstances, of risking any further operations with our own Troops on the Coast of France, I entirely agree with you in the Expediency of sending liberal Supplies of Money, wherever We have reasonable ground to hope that they will not be misapplied. I have accordingly given directions for procuring as expeditiously as possible a further Sum of £100,000 in dollars.

The Precaution you suggest, of sending Stores &c. for our own Troops, with a view to their possible detention, is certainly highly proper, and directions have been sent for providing the most necessary Articles. I shall certainly be in Town on Tuesday.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely

W. PITT.

The following letter refers to Windham's speech on the Treasonable Practices Bill, 16 Nov. 1795.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 85.)

Nov. 17, 1795

MY DEAR SIR,

When a man acts only like himself, and in his usual manner, he hardly expects any thanks. You could not hear an attack on a departed friend, and not say something in his favour, without an injury to your natural Character and a violence to all your feelings; so I thank you for acting up to yourself. You could not easily do more upon this, or upon any occasion. As to what you have said of me, it belongs to your own partiality. I suppose you were induced to do me so infinitely more than justice, from the provocation given you by the large measure of injustice dealt out to me so liberally by others. After seeing my young Oxen work, under their Herefordshire Preceptor, till the Rain drove me in, I sat down to write to you, not this, but another Letter a good deal more full. In that I indulged in some reflexions that grew out of the Debate. I could not finish it. Night, dinner, and my after-dinner's Nap came upon me, and left me a little heavy. I had made some progress in a Letter to Lord Grenville, who behaved handsomely in the House of Lords; in that I took some Notice (as much as he deserved), of the Duke of Bedford. As to him I may say—*Tecum est mihi sermo Rubelli!* Ah! my dear friend—you stood for me that day in the place of your departed friend; and I mix my Tears for him with my grateful acknowledgments to you. I had *one* to speak a word in that house for a person who had spoken many a word for many a Man. You were but *one*: But there was multitude in that Monad.

By the way does not Sheridan rather abuse the Privilege of his new Kindred with the Duke of Portland; and make a little too free with his Cousin? Seriously there never was so much indecency. The Number of these Gentlemen *in the House* is not yet very considerable—but their Style seems to bespeak confidence in Numbers

elsewhere, within the Kingdom, or within the neighbouring Republick. It was said, I know not by what Spartan, to an ambassador of I know not what small commonwealth, "Friend, your Speech supposes an Army!" Their speeches certainly do. If I knew nothing but from the Papers, I should think they contrived to keep the *Haut de Pavée*. Mr Pitt seems to have begun his speech in a perfectly proper manner; but it looks as if he were beat down by Clamours; and had abandon'd the Ground he had so advantageously taken. This I am sure of, that it is perfectly ridiculous, after all that has happen'd, to affect to consider¹ the present traitorous machinations, or any other of the evils of our time as attributable to a Mob. If that were all, tho' in that Case I should not despise the danger, I should think it infinitely less than I do. The body of the People is untainted in all Ranks, and it is by far the most sound in the humblest of all; But there is no rank or class into which the Evil of Jacobinism has not penetrated; and that disseminated contagion is infinitely more mischievous than if it had seized upon the *whole* of any *one* description—for then the *whole* of some *other* would be enabled to act with Union, energy and vigour against it. But it will happen with us, I fear, as it has happen'd in France, where the Crasis of the blood was everywhere broke, curdled, and in a manner dissolved; and this led to the general Dissolution.—As to the Bills you have in hand, they are good, so far as they go. *Valeant quantum valere possunt*. You must make many more of them, and after all the whole body will be effectual. Do you not trust too much in *Laws*, and take *men* too little into your account? Your Magistrates will not be able to balance, or even to stand before the great men, who, by and by, will attend those meetings, which your Bills permit and in vain endeavour to regulate. They raise all the Clamour of the strongest measure, and they are imbecillity itself. They will produce other Bills, the Children not of their strength, but of their weakness; and will multiply like those feeble animals who increase in proportion to their insignificance. "With the French Republick at your door—your constitution *cannot* exist." It is too weak to protect itself.—Upon every trial you will make new discoveries of its impotence;

¹ Interlined in pencil "attribute."

and what is worse, of the debility of the materials that compose it. If you attempt to change it, you will shake the Country on which it stands to its very Centers ; and let in the very Evil you mean to prevent. All I have to advise at present is that you will follow your Bills for the safety of the King's Person &c. with an act of *association*, like that in Queen Elizabeth's, and that in King William's reign, contriving if possible to *discriminate*, by some effectual Test, and what is more effectual, by the Judicious choice of some Committees, of weight enough to call upon the other Associators (always under the sanction of Government for their acts, and their existence too) to assist them with their whole *posse*. This will be absolutely necessary towards making a regular party for the Constitution. But still remember, I say all this *protestando*, that with a Fraternity with the Regicide system of France neither any thing I can propose, or that can come from Wisdom ten thousand times beyond mine, can even adjourn our Ruin for a very short period.

Tread cautiously in this affair of Provisions. What did Judge Ashurst mean by the Combinations he speaks of? That part of his Speech in Westminster Hall seem'd to me more calculated to inflame the people (if such speech he did make) than the Speeches of all the Demagogues without. O! sad, sad Work! By the way call to your Clerk Nagle for the Copy of the Memoire I delivered to Mr Pitt. I suppose he thought nothing of it. It certainly called for no answer. The Committee's report is all it can be. The danger is their going further. What folly it is to recommend Potatoes to the People. They eat already all they have, or can get. I had about 150 Bushels. I sell them at 20^d by pecks and half pecks. In a few days I shall not have a Potatoe to dispose of—and none of my Neighbours have any ; all theirs are sold ; and tomorrow or next day I shall send to London for a Ton or so at any price.

I began one Letter which I did not send on account of the length it was growing to : and I have written to you one that is as long or longer than what I would have added. Adieu. Good Night, and God bless you. We shall remember you and your Collegues in our private Evening prayer : to God I commend you. Again and again Adieu.

E. B.

On 23 Nov. 1795 Charles Sturt, member for Bridport, upon bringing in a petition of some twelve thousand signatures, in the name of the London Corresponding Society, against the Treason and Sedition Bills, took occasion, by way of counterblast, to raise a question of privilege in reference to a pamphlet entitled *Thoughts on the English Government*, published anonymously, but well known to be the work of John Reeves, the King's Printer, who was also president of the Association against Republicans and Levellers. Among the passages read was one in which Reeves spoke of the government of England as essentially a monarchy: "the monarchy is the ancient stock from which have sprung those goodly branches of the legislature, the Lords and Commons, that at the same time give ornament to the tree and afford shelter to those who seek protection under it. But these are still only branches, and derive their origin and their nutriment from their common parent; they may be lopped off, and the tree is a tree still; shorn indeed of its honours, but not, like them, cast into the fire. The kingly government may go on in all its functions without Lords or Commons, it has heretofore done so for years together, and in our times it does so during every recess of parliament; but without the king his parliament is no more." This was sufficient to cause Sheridan to describe it as "the foulest, the falsest, the dullest and the most malicious libel that had ever come under the cognizance of the house¹."

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 88.)

WEDNESDAY EVENING, HALF PAST NINE.

Nov. 29, 1795.

Summum, Brute, nefas civilia Bella fatemur
sed quo fata vocant Virtus secura sequatur².—

The rest is a rant unworthy the Stoic School, and the person in whose mouth it is put, and only excusable in a declaimer of five and twenty, who sang it *ante Culices Maronis*. It is coming fast to that

¹ *Parliamentary History* (1818), pp. 608 sqq.

² Lucan, II. 286.

point which you and I have long foreseen. As we have foreseen it, it would be a shame indeed if we were not prepared for it, both in the collectedness of our own minds, and in every precaution, which in our situation belongs to us. After what has happen'd in France, it would be a shame indeed if M^r Foxes Guillotin (I mean the travelling Guillotin for me, the permanent for you), should come to our Doors, without our having a previous struggle for our Necks, and for what ought to be far more precious to us. I have this morning paid M^r Dallimore six pound, eighteen and tenpence, for bringing me from Herefordshire a fine pair of oxen, and training and disciplining six of my own. I have now eight, with which all my Tillage for the next year may go on sufficiently well: and I have eight fine young Horses, fit for mounting heavy Cavalry, on which I think I can put eight very handsome young men, whenever you make your first requisition. Our parish is not quite five and twenty hundred acres, as I imagine; yet out of this little place, I have no sort of doubt that with much good will, and a very little force, you may have thirty heavy Horse and about twenty light. By this scantling judge of England; wherever you choose to pour the English youth and the English steeds, upon the plains of Picardy or of Brittany. For there and there alone, in my opinion, this civil War, not of England but of Europe, may or can be fought with advantage. However, I am willing to take my part of it wherever you please. Tell this to M^r Pitt, and assure him that he has not betray'd his Master by recommending his Bounty to me. It is true that I labour under an infirmity that may possibly prevent me from serving on Horseback: I have not mounted an Horse for several years. But one can find his way to heaven on foot. However, I am not sure, that in such a cause, I could not ride. If that should prove so, I beg you to contrive matters so, that I may act under young Elliot. I have nothing more to say on that head. When the question is of War, I have only to obey orders. My knowledge does not qualifie me for any thing more.

I turn to other matters in which, without being more skilfull, I am more conversant. A great deal depends on your support of Reeves. I have written you a long letter to which I sat down in

about a couple of Hours after I received Woodford's. I ought to have been up earlier, and then I should have answered it sooner. I had but just time to run over his piece. My Letter was written in great haste. It is in three Sheets, and I fear it is hardly Legible. I sent it by Josiah Wade, a fine lad, and one that I think I can give you, bred up by myself. He left this at four. As I wrote in haste, there may be some marks of what the French call *Humeur* in my Letter, but let that pass. I adhere to the substance of it. I am ready to live and die for the Creed that you and Mr Pitt have subscrib'd. I have never heard, during my service in Parliament, and it has been an hot and tempestuous time, any thing like the Debate that I read in this *Sun* that came to me this morning. The desperateness, the Fury, the insolence of the Revolutionists has no example. When they charged, some time ago, the King's Ministers with a plot against his person¹ for the purpose of laying it on their Clubs, which was done in both Houses, if you had refused to go on till that matter of charge was clear'd up, either for your Punishment for a double Treason of such atrocity, or for the just animadversion on those who made so foul and scandalous a charge, you would not have had yesterday's work, or rather the work of the day before, as I think it was. I ran over the Newspaper very hastily this morning.

The author who was the subject of their attack was well chosen. When they get rid of him, no Magistrate will act for you. No Man of parts will write for you. He has considerable abilities. If indeed he had left out all his dissertation on Dead men, and dead parties, his Book would not have been the worse for it.

As to the Doctrine in the part complained of—it is neither more nor less than the Law of the Land. If the Crown Lawyers abandon it (I think too well of them to imagine they will), they betray the Law, they betray their Trust, they betray their Master, they betray their friends in Ministry, and (if it were worth mentioning after all these) they betray themselves. The discreet Mr Adair², and the flourishing Mr Harding³ come forth. The latter is the D. of Portland's

¹ 29 Oct. 1795, when the king's carriage was shot at as he went to open parliament.

² Serjeant James Adair, M.P. for Higham Ferrers.

³ George Hardinge, M.P. for Old Sarum.

creature, the last (*sic*) is Mr Pitt's—or the late Lord Camden's. Fine work indeed. How they are alarmed about Mr Reeves' *Heraldry* of the Constitution! Whether the Lords and Commons or the King should walk first in the procession! Which is the Root, which the Branches? In good faith they cut up the Root and the Branches! A fine Business of Law Grammar, which is the Substantive, which the Adjective? When an Author lays down the *whole* as to be revered and adhered to—at any former time would any one have made a cause of quarrel, that he had given the Priority to any *part*? especially to that part which was attacked and exposed? My opinion is, that if you do not kick this business out with scorn, Reeves ought to petition and to desire to be heard by himself and his Counsel. Shew this to Mr Pitt, if you think it right.

Adieu! Adieu! Ever y^{rs}

E. BURKE, or what remains of him and his.

BURKE TO WOODFORD.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 90.)

[29 Nov. 1795.]

I began my letter to Mr Windham with a Motto from Lucan to entertain him, for I can do nothing more. I begin this with a Motto from Virgil¹.

— cur, *in Limine primo*
deficimus? cur *ante tubam* tremor occupat artus?

The disposition you mention in your Letter, which I have just got by Josiah Wade, seems to me a sad prelude to the Civil War with which we are so boldly and declaredly threat'ned. You are a soldier, and you know how much it is to shew a good Countenance in the presence of an Enemy. Well then, we are to have no Civil War? but we are to have something worse—to go to the Guillotine of our worthy sovereign Citizens without a struggle. God's will be done!

¹ *Aen.* XI. 423.

I have long thought that, though we have many persons of parts and of Eloquence and of first rate Capacities for Business of all sorts, that the animal called a *Statesman* was (against the Rule of the Schools), —“a lost kind.” I now find, what is worse than a want of Statesmen, that there is a want of *men*. To be beat is not pleasant ; but to be bullied is sad and ridiculous at once.

The thing is decided, and at the moment I write they are not in the middle of a fight, but of a flight, and the Enemy has done some good Execution on us for four or five hours. So that what I write is only to amuse Windham whilst his Wounds are dressing. I have only to say, that this same *fear* which some dignifye with the name of *Prudence* is the worst of all providers for *safety*. I am a very great admirer of *Fear*,—when it is in its proper place, that is long *before* the danger ; but by no means when you are in the midst of it. Why should not M^r Reeves petition ? Let them name a day for them to hear him—and whilst that is pending let them go on with their Bill. Instead of being frighten'd and confused with this Event, if they had bespoken it, begged it, fasted and prayed for it, nothing better, by any possibility, could have happen'd to them. It would rouse the Nation. It would animate its languid attention. It would call forth, what at present they hardly have, a *party* in their favour. I hope they are cured of the delusive hope of national *unanimity*. If they have not a *party*, they have *nothing*, and they have that option and that only to make. Are they always to run away ?

An Exordium for M^r Reeves.

SIR,

It is a source of real consolation to me, in the midst of great afflictions for the present and under some melancholy prognostications for the future, that I appear before his Majesties most dutiful and Loyal Subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled—that I appear before the representative body of my fellow Subjects, all the Commons of Great Britain ; and not before the representatives of the *Sovereign People*, real or pretended, of *this* or any other Country, in National Convention assembled.

This, Sir, is the Style of this Hon^{ble} House, renewed solemnly every year at the foot of the Throne ; and this, which is your glory, is my safety. Whilst we are all fellow-subjects, we are entitled to an equal Law, and we derive from that equal Law an equal security ; a security which is common to us all ; from the greatest Duke who can appear in the Area before Westminster Hall, to me an humble Magistrate of the City of Westminster, now at your Bar in defence of myself against a charge of violating the Privileges of your House.

It is, Sir, an heavy charge—and just the last in the world that I ever dreamed would have been made against me. I hope, instead of violating, I would die to preserve your Privileges. They are a sacred part of the Law of the Land, which at your humble prayer his Majesty recognized at your Election, and at the Election and his Royal approbation of every Speaker does continually grant and recognize. I am a Magistrate, and I think I should fly in the Face not only of this House, before which I prostrate myself with an humble, and sincere, and truly filial reverence, but of his Majesty, to whom, and to whom alone, I have sworn Allegiance, if I were capable of infringing one of the most important of the Laws, which, as a Magistrate, the King has appointed [me] to observe, and to cause others to observe, and of which Laws, and above all, of this High Law, the Privilege, Laws, Custom and Usage of Parliament, his Majesty is a most vigilant Guardian and a most strenuous asserter. I should be a Rebel to my King—if I intentionally failed in fidelity and Duty to his faithful Commons. Permit me, Sir, to say that we are all, King, Lords, Commons in Parliament assembled, and Commons at large, embarked on one Common Bottom, and have one Common Enemy. I have never known any Persons concern'd in sinister Machinations against the King (for such there are, as you well know and have publish'd to the world) that do not shew the worst possible dispositions to this honourable House. Nor any of *these* seditious persons (for I speak not of others, God forbid), who under pretext of reforming you, but in reality to produce universal confusion, do not shew a very dangerous ill-disposition towards the Crown. I am not in neither the one nor the other of these descriptions. The Book I wrote and freely acknowledge was with an Intent to

serve both; and all the Doctrine it contains, with great submission to the better Judgment of this House, is, I maintain it, agreeable to the Laws and Constitution of my Country.

As to my expressions—I most humbly supplicate that this House will demean itself towards me with that Magnanimity with w^{ch} it has passed over both matters and expressions of a far more doubtful Nature. My Petition to this House, and my Language at the Bar are, and ever shall be, very different from that of several Petitions that lie quietly on your Table, and from that of several discussions that are quietly vended throughout the Kingdom.

I understand, that some *Metaphors* in a general and merely theoretical part of my printed Letter, are consider'd as Crimes. I should have hoped that for *Metaphors* I should have been called to answer before some Literary Academy (not the Academy of France, which I utterly disclaim), and that I should have answer'd to *Criticks* before the Tribunal of Criticism. For any wrong opinions concerning the Antiquities of our Laws, I fancied I should only answer before the Society of Antiquaries; but finding my Mistake, but still adhering to my principles, I renounce, abjure and detest all the heretical pravity of my *Metaphors*. If they are not¹, as, I fear, from mere carelessness some of them are, of less studied respect than they ought to be towards this House [in regard] of antient times and in theoretical abstraction, I renounce the abstractions, the Theories, the Antiquities, and above all the wicked and depraved *Metaphors*. I have heard of an Archbishop who would not promote a very worthy Clergyman because, as he heard, he played at Whist and *Swabbers*². That for an innocent game of Whist, it was very tolerable. He plaid at it now and then himself; but as to those wicked *swabbers*, they were not to be endured. Now I renounce the *swabbers* and the *Metaphors*. I most solemnly declare disrespect

¹ *sic*.

² The story is taken from Swift's *Intelligencer* (1728) and the Archbishop was Tenison. The exact method of reckoning swabbers is not absolutely certain, but according to "Cavendish" they appear to have been four cards (ace and deuce of trumps, ace of hearts, knave of clubs) which, like honours, gave their possessors a right to a score, or share of the stake, apart from the play of the hand, and they are supposed to have survived in rural circles as late as 1873.

was far from my heart. I give up my foolish Roots, and Trunks and branches and all their vain foliage. I give them cheerfully to warm your stoves.

Has, Vulcane, dicat *Sylvas* tibi Villicus Aemon!

For the future I shall stick to my profession. We Lawyers do not always make the best hand of a Metaphor. I have burned my fingers with them. In future I shall avoid all Metaphors. I shall stick to my precedent Book, my Entries and to my special pleading, and shall never get beyond the *safe style*, of "*absque Hoc, quod, quod etc.*" *Omnia si sic!*

This I think would put the House into good humour and make them listen to the wholesome doctrine he would afterwards stand to. But why do I trouble myself and you? It is all over with us. The Cape is a good acquisition—but for us there is no Cape of good hope.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 94.)

Jan^y 17, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I send you another Pamphlet, which I took at first to be a Twin-Brother of the one that you have lately been considering, but which I find has no relation to it in the line of its descent; though it has a complete one in its character and lineaments, as well as in the favour of those who become its Parents by adopting it. I thought at first it had been Lord Auckland's, but I have understood since that it is the work of another hand. They both work however to the same end; and I am sorry to find that their work is approved and sanctioned by the same authorities. When you have read to about the middle, you will see of what kidney the writer is, and you will judge before that, that if the work is spoken of as a production of considerable ability by the persons I have alluded to, it must be from approbation of the sentiments, and not from their

being led away by any unusual merit in the composition. In that respect its character might be contented to stand at Par between praise and blame. Its general tendency is that which is the most material; which becomes more so from the approbation it seems to meet with; and which makes me desirous that you should have it at this time under your consideration; though I don't know that it can add to, or alter anything in, what you are at present about.

The Moment of Peace is yet, I hope, so far distant, that chance may still do much to save us from so dreadful a Catastrophe: I mean of course Peace with a Jacobin Republick; yet every thing has a dreadful tendency that way: and the great impediment is wanting; a conviction of the extent of the danger which from that moment will begin to operate against the Country. It really does not appear to me, that from the moment that such a Peace is made the shame and degradation of this Country will be any longer supportable. I cannot but image to myself the circumstances of one of the Regicides and Septembrizers opening his house in London as Ambassador of the Republick, and finding it crowded (as he certainly will) by the wives and daughters of the first Nobility and Gentry of the Country; who will be initiated there in the doctrines of Revolutionary Morality, and be ready to take Lessons in the practice from the numberless able and agreeable professors, who will attend there for that purpose. It might be a curious question of propriety, if any such were worth attending to, on what footing the Ambassadors was to be; and how the case of a Wife, removable upon four days notice, should be distinguished from that of a Mistress? But it would be in vain to make any bones of such distinctions; and there is no doubt that Mad^e de Fontenay¹, should Tallien be our Ambassador, will be as well received, and as much in fashion as M^e de Polignac, or the Princesse de Lamballe, or any foreign woman of distinction that we have known in our time. I daresay there will [be] a Fontenay Cap that will prevail amongst the women, as we remember the Nivernois hat to have done among

¹ *Née* Cabarus, of Bordeaux; by sparing her Tallien became suspect, and in self-defence accused Robespierre, whereby she was in some sense the first cause of the chain of events which resulted in bringing the Terror to an end.

the men. You know probably from Woodford in what manner a Mr Bird who was sent over to endeavour to save the Duc de Choiseul¹ was received by La Croix², the Minister for foreign Affairs; I mean in what dress he found him; and how lodged. He was in a magnificent Hôtel, approaching to the Character of a Palace; and was dressed in a black velvet Cloak lined with scarlet, a scarlet Vest, scarlet Pantaloons; wore a gold-hilted sword and a Hat à la Henri IV, with a Panache of Tricolor feathers. I have not heard that they dress their Ambassadors in any particular manner; but I daresay that it will happen so before long; and that when the party shall be a little more established in this Country we shall find that dress, whatever it shall be, beginning to make its appearance here in the same manner as the cropped heads.

Those who are desirous of Peace, and yet are not friends to the French System, ground their hopes on the misery and dissention likely to continue in that Country, and the effect which that will have, both in disabling them from any attacks against us by open Force; and by furnishing an Antidote against the progress of their Principles. This is the point which it will be necessary most to labour. I fear that that security will not turn out to be what it is expected; though it will be very likely to secure this Country against any immediate shock; and to enable it to hold out during the lives of the present possessors of power, whether King or Ministers: it seems to me that the Country will then have contracted its death's disease, and have imbibed a Jacobin-taint which will never leave it till it has effected its destruction: it is very probable that the disorder may not shew itself in any alarming way for a considerable time; and that during the interval the Country may seem to enjoy an unusual degree of health and prosperity; but the Complaint will, I apprehend, be in the blood, not to be expelled but by some such violent courses

¹ Claude Antoine Gabriel, Duc de Choiseul. He was first imprisoned for aiding in the flight to Varennes, then released in the amnesty, remained with the Queen till her transference to the Temple, was proscribed and went into exile, was captured in the Netherlands, escaped from Dunkirk prison, took service in an English expedition to the Indies, was wrecked on the French coast near Calais and remained in prison till 1800.

² Charles La Croix, Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Directory.

as will endanger the existence of the whole frame ; and as, after all, will never suffer us to recover that state of strength and vigour which we once enjoyed.

I had intended, instead of sending you the Pamphlet, to have been the bearer of it myself ; but the necessity of returning on Monday to the Birthday, and some engagements that detained me late Yesterday, have made me defer my hopes till another opportunity, which I hope however to be able to meet with before long.

I am, dear Sir, most truly and faithfully

Yours

[W. WINDHAM].

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 97.)

Jan. 19, 1796.

MY D^R SIR,

I thank you most sincerely for your Letter, tho' I had rather have heard the same things from yourself. It is exactly as you say. Our moral world will be wasted by this Peace. The Pamphlet you sent me I had seen before. I thought it Lord Auckland's. It is a natural sequel of the October piece. In fact it is pretty nearly the same—not quite I think so full of gross and glaring contradictions—tho' at the bottom equally flimsy in the arguments and profligate in the Sentiments. I send you some of the sheets for Woodford. I find they lay great weight on the dresses, and they shall have a good dressing. Good God, what a Horner's nest of Enemies am I making to destroy my miserable repose. But if this Fraternity is made, nothing is worth caring for. Adieu and believe me ever,

My d^r Sir, most truly yours

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 99.)

BECONSFIELD, *March 6, 1796.*

MY DEAR SIR,

What I was given to understand, but what I could not believe, nor could you, has happen'd¹—the House of Commons is condemned in Costs and Damages by the East India Company. We have charged Hastings with Robbery of the People of India. Instead of punishing him we reward him with a second Robbery. No account demanded of him. No reason asked why, with an immense salary, when he might have been honestly rich, he is as he says miserably poor? Why no account of the Bribes? The Lords may say, they will not convict him of them: but they have not said, nor can they say, that he has accounted for the money, tho' their Judgment has the infamy to say, that Bribery, and forgery of Bonds to cover it, is a proper way of getting a Revenue—but no account! no account of any kind! My dear Sir, I must not have it said that we have compromised the matter by a Pension to the accuser and another to the Accused. The house of Lords may say we have made a false charge—so may the Bystanders—are we to say it ourselves?

I hope to have my Petition ready by the end of the week. Your poor friend M^{rs} Burke is still very ill and cannot quit her Room or her Couch. I have suspended the work on the peace. It is not fit that any good should happen to this enormous Mass of corruption, peculation, oppression, Robbery, prevarication in Judgment, and direct perversion of Judgment. God's ways are unsearchable. But I think the bolt will fall, and it is fit that it should fall on me amongst the rest. Adieu, Adieu.

Ever y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

¹ At a General Court of the East India Company, 2 March 1796, the chairman announced that a resolution of the Court of Directors granting to Hastings an annuity of £4000 for 28½ years had been confirmed by the Board of Control.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 101.)

BECONSFIELD, *March 7, 1796.*

MY DEAR SIR,

In the multiplicity of your affairs, it is natural you should let slip from your Mind a thing of so little consequence as the application I made you in favour of a man who has the misfortune of being a relation of mine, and is therefore, with the very best possible Character from every Officer he served under, seventeen years a subaltern in the Militia. You will recollect that I wished you to state this Case to His R^l Highness the Duke of York, for a Lieutenancy for him in an old Regiment—always on a Condition that you are perfectly satisfied about his Character from his Officers. Will a Memorial for him be necessary? and you will be so good to take such measures as you please about it. You will much oblige me, and you will thereby pour, as on other occasions you have done, some balm into a wounded Spirit and that is sick of many Grievances. Adieu and believe me with most real respect and affection,

My d^r Sir, Your most faithful and obed^t humble ser^t

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 103.)

BECONSFIELD, EASTER MONDAY [28 *Mar.* 1796].

MY DEAR SIR,

I shall say but a few words. Pray lose no time in sending me an order for the House at Penn. I shall be your Deputy Barrack-Master. Francis open'd his plan¹ to me; which necessarily led me,

¹ For the better regulation of slaves in the West Indies. On 11 April, in moving for leave to bring in a Bill, Francis referred to Burke's plan as having been communicated to Pelham and Windham, but added that as it was more comprehensive than his own he had not availed himself of Windham's invitation to see it. Burke's plan is presumably in substance the "Sketch of the Negro Code" printed in his *Works* (1852), v. p. 591, but a MS. copy in the Windham Papers, Add. MS. 37890, f. 3, contains a few additions in Burke's own hand.

if I were not to appear dry and discouraging to him, to give him some Lines of my Ideas. He had but one Notion; that indeed perfectly agreed with mine—which was to give property to the Negroes, but as this was without any scheme whatsoever to effectuate and support it, I referred him to the plan in your hands, and I believe he will talk to you. I wish you to put yourself in possession of your Ground—otherwise the whole will be blown up by everyone running and snatching a piece here and there. God bless you. I forgot to say that it would be but a proper Compliment to Woodford for his Zeal in this Cause, that the money for the School, if given on the military fund, should pass to me through him.

Ever most truly y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

WINDHAM TO PITT.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 122.)

April 27, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

What was mentioned cursorily the other day, when I had the pleasure of seeing you in Downing Street, has certainly a great deal that is deserving of consideration, and contributes to fix me in the opinion that the Business respecting the Royalists, though in some Respects usefully placed in my Hands, may upon the whole be better conducted if left to follow the course of the other military service, and confined to those Departments to which alone it can officially belong.

Two causes obstruct the success of these Measures in my hands:—the necessity, which is unavoidable, of recurring in every Instance to other Departments, even for the very Power by which any Measure is originally to be put in motion; and secondly the jealousy entertained, that I am at times acting rather according to my own Ideas than in Conformity to those which the Cabinet have finally adopted. The Fact is really not so. Whatever my own ideas may be, I have

never allowed myself to transgress that Line which the Cabinet have thought it right to prescribe. But as long as the ground of suspicion remains, the Apprehension may from time to time operate, and is therefore among the Reasons which may induce the Opinion above mentioned, namely that the Business respecting the Royalists may go on better if left exclusively to the regular official Channels. I for one shall be perfectly willing to place it there, having originally only accepted this office as a sort of Chapel of Ease to Mr Dundas, and because it seemed to me that no one else was so likely to attend to the Duties of it.

One Consideration only I wish to be strongly impressed—that the Business in Question, by whomever conducted, must be altogether a work of detail, requiring constant and minute attention, and incapable of being carried on to any useful Purpose under the mere effect of general Orders, however large and liberal those Orders may be. Great Expeditions must in general owe their Success to their force; and may dispense therefore with any attention to detail, except in those who are to follow up the execution of them in their last and lowest stages.

But all the Assistance that we can at present give to the Royalists, or have the immediate prospect of giving, must be the Effect of Contrivance and Combination, and can be prepared in the first instance by those only, who will submit to the pains of conversing with the Persons who come from the Country; of communicating by every opportunity with those who remain there; of examining their Plans; of comparing their accounts; of informing himself minutely of the State of their Affairs; of concerting with them the Means of adapting the Measures to be taken here to the corresponding Movements to be made in the Interior.

All this neither Mr Dundas nor Huskisson can have time to go through. I should recommend therefore earnestly to him to appoint some one or two Persons—if Military Men, the better—who may be entrusted with the Care of this Department and report the results of their communications, and opinions, upon which He and the Cabinet may afterwards decide.

In this way things will go on more regularly and possibly more

advantageously, I am afraid, I must say, that they are not likely to go on less so.—I much question indeed whether we are not now too late, and whether the next News will not be that the army of Scepeaux is gone the same way as those of Stofflet, Sapinaud and Charette. We must determine however on the State of things such as it now remains.

I have no wish but that the Cause may prosper, by whatever means that end may be brought about, and if more is likely to be done in the way that I have now proposed, I shall have an additional Reason for regretting that I did not sooner free myself from a charge of infinite Trouble, Anxiety and Vexation, in which I fear I have done but little good, and in which I have for ever felt myself in the painful situation of pressing importunately upon others' attention, what they did not at least feel to be of the same importance that I did.

The Enjoyment that I have been feeling since yesterday in the Country does not dispose one less to the divesting oneself of any Employment which makes the Necessity of closer Residence in London. I should not however be influenced by this Consideration, if I saw the possibility of being in any Degree useful to my Friends the Chouans. I shall take care to return in time for the Debate tomorrow, and am,

My dear Sir, yours very truly

WILLIAM WINDHAM.

In a letter to the same effect to Dundas¹, 1 May 1796, Windham remarks "My ideas with respect to the whole of this subject do not differ perhaps so much from yours as you have sometimes supposed. I differ no doubt inasmuch as I would from the beginning have made this the principal object of the war and considered all others, unless I am to except the Cape of Good Hope, as subordinate.... What I complain of is, not that we are following a wrong system, but that we do not act up to the system that we profess :....that nobody shews any interest in the success of the Royalists; nobody

¹ Add. MS. 37876, f. 89.

will take the trouble to understand their affairs; no one will willingly hear any mention of them; no one, except by compulsion, will take any steps in their behalf. There is not the slightest want of the most subordinate department of service that does not take place of their most pressing demands....It is impossible, I know, for you to follow all these details; nor can they either be consistent with the innumerable avocations of Huskisson; it was for that reason that I was willing, as you know, even before I came into Office, to take upon myself a part of that business, knowing that I should at least not be wanting in that species of Qualification that would result from goodwill. The business however has not prospered in my hands."

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 105.)

BECONSFIELD, *June 2, 1796.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Thanks to the good part of Norwich¹. I think it was the only Election in which I felt a real Interest. It was at least the first and deepest Interest I felt. I have now only to tell you that the D. of Bourbon has signified his pleasure, that he will come hither to see our School on Monday. He dines here, and goes away that night after his Jaunt to Penn—which will be in the morning. If you could come hither on Sunday night, and go with them in the morning to see Penn, it would be best of all; I do not insist on your returning with them. Mrs Crewe is here; and tells me she has engaged you for Monday. So you must not tell her of this solicitation. They were to have been here tomorrow; but they have put it off till the day I mention. Perhaps Woodford may come with you. With my best congratulations on a really important event;

Ever most truly y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

¹ Norwich returned Windham and Sir John Hobart to the new Parliament, 25 May 1796.

What the Devil? Fox and Horne joined¹! and Government with^t another to run at them! I should not wonder if they carried it!

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 107.)

TUESDAY [7 June, 1796].

MY DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your kind sollicitude about Mrs Burke. Except in the power of much motion she is tolerably well. In that disability she continues much as she was. There is no perceptible amendment. For myself I have my old windy complaints, which are rather disagreeable than painful. I have too a spasmodick affection in my right leg, which comes and goes I know not why or how. The sore for which there is no salve gives me only a bad quarter of an hour now and then. As to the publick, like our great King and great Armies I take my safety in Flight and ignorance. I never read the Newspaper; and only hear now and then what I cannot well prevent. One of the worst things I hear about the future is the present Prince of Wales. There is a sort of rebellion by anticipation. The Rehearsal is tolerably perfect. God's will be done. Every thing, bating the loss of your presence, went off very well. The Scene was really affecting. I like the Duke of Bourbon extremely—he has a modest dignity and perfect good behaviour—*quales esse decet quos ardens purpura vestit*². But his, poor man, is stripped off. Mrs Burke is very happy to hear of your intended visit; and the more as she just now learnt that you have prevailed on Miss Lukin³ to come along with you. Adieu.

Believe me ever sincerely yours

EDM. BURKE.

¹ John Horne Tooke stood for Westminster. Fox and the government candidate, Sir Alan Gardner, were successful.

² Juvenal xi. 155.

³ Windham's half-sister, or his niece.

Windham visited Burke at Beaconsfield on 18 July: "M^{rs} Crewe and Laurence there...M^r B. far from well."

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 109.)

BATH, Aug^t 1, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I take the Pen out of M^{rs} Burke's hands to express our common and very warm sense of the Kindness of your Sollicitude about my health. It is of some value, since such as you appear to take an Interest in it. The value in other respects is not so apparent. But if it pleases God it should be established for some short time, I conclude it must be for some good purposes, great or small according to the proportion an individual bears to the whole, as a link in a chain infinite in extent and in duration. Of my Death I ought to conclude the same. But I have said enough on this. Remaining only for me to add, that though all the symptoms of my complaint went on with an accelerated aggravation for the first days after my arrival here, for these last four the progress of the evil, I may say, has been stopped, and, weakness and emaciation excepted, I am not at all worse than when you saw me. As to what you are so good to expect from me, I can do nothing at present, being wholly incapable of all application—and for what?—*Non si meus afforet Hector!* If even you, in the full force of a youthful manhood, in an high situation, with such Virtues, Talents, and Acquirements as God has dispensed to very few living (if to any), can do nothing—if from your meridian lustre the publick can reflect no light, what can be done by the expiring snuff of my farthing Candle? No, there is no one thing which we can propose, that to those who shut their eyes to the evil (and therefore cannot conceive what remedies are proportion'd to it), that would not be thought monstrous, wild and extravagant. Are we of the stuff of those who, with Hannibal in the Bowels of Italy, would think of transferring the gross of our strength to Africk and to Spain? I go no further.—All must depend on individuals, a very few individuals, now, as always it has done. If the Duumvirate¹ who

¹ Pitt and Dundas.

direct all (you will pardon me if I do not call you a Minister) have not the courage to look our situation in the face themselves, and to state it to Parliament too; if they do not cease to consider what is to be said to their adversaries there, as an eloquent Bar defence grounded on the principles of those adversaries, rather than what ought to be done against the grand adversary, then I say there is not for us a Ray of Hope. Their talents are great indeed—but if they are thus directed, better half, with a just direction, than the whole, than twice the whole, in the present course. You talk of coming hither: to be sure, if it can be done without detriment to the great concern, it will be a great consolation to me. But indeed, my dear friend, the times admit no secondary attentions. Mrs Burke—herself very lame and rather worse at ease in her Limbs—desires a thousand grateful remembrances to you and to the Ladies of your family.

Ever, ever y^{rs}—the remains of

EDM. BURKE.

EARL SPENCER TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 144.)

[Endorsed, 24 Aug. 1796.]

DEAR WINDHAM,

Though I am quite overwhelmed today with heat and Business, I cannot drive back to Wimbledon without giving you one Line, to express my sincere satisfaction at your being returned to Town. The Moment is too critical not to require most imperiously the attendance of everyone who has got a head upon his shoulders to deliberate with, and any remnant of Nerves in his frame with which to determine what it becomes a man to do. I am as yet under the first description, but really can hardly be considered as under the second, for in truth I am much nearer being knocked up completely than ever I have been yet. We shall meet tomorrow at a Cabinet adjourned from yesterday, when you will hear a good deal which bears upon the topick mentioned in Burke's Letter about

Mr Noble. I have appointed one of the commiss^{rs} of the Navy to talk to him on the subject of Rohu's business¹ tomorrow morning, and you shall hear the Result.

Yours ever sincerely

SPENCER.

On 21 Aug. 1796, Windham wrote a very strong remonstrance to Dundas upon the reduction of the corps of Mortemart and Castries, of which proposal he had just received the first intimation in a letter from the Duke of York. He took the strongest objection to the measure and also to the reduction of the emigré organisation known as the "cadres," which "were never intended for any very efficient service, at least out of France, but were meant in great measure as a means of honourable though scanty subsistence for the persons who composed them."

DUNDAS TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37876, f. 214.)

Private

WIMBLEDON,

24th Aug. 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter from Bath, and can assure you with the utmost sincerity, both on publick and private considerations, that nothing gives me more serious Regret than the misfortune I labour under of differing from you essentially on the Subjects of your letter. At the same time you must be aware that my letter is merely a letter of Suggestions, subject to the opinion of others, and of course perfectly open to any Representations you can urge against it. I should not however deal with you in that Spirit of openness and Candor, which I hope shall continue to carry me through the remainder of my political life, as it has actuated the past, if I did not state to you that I conceive your reasoning and

¹ Claims of a Breton, Vincent Rohu, employed by Sir John Warren as manager of all the *chasse-marées*; see a letter of Warren's, Add. MS. 37876, f. 202, and Rohu's petition, *ib.* f. 120.

feelings on the Subject to be very erroneous, and not justified in any respect by the Circumstances of the respective cases to which your letter refers. I have no objection to any liberality that the Generosity of the Country may feel disposed to go to [to] Emigrés of any description or to the Cadres in particular, but I am positive that to maintain them or any other corps *in the form of Military Establishment*, without the power of calling upon them to discharge Military Duty, is what the Country and Parliament neither can [n]or ought to bear. This is the only point on which in the present Discussion we differ.

I enclose to you two papers which I wish you well to consider, and I am sure when you do so you will not conceive that the question is whether the finances of the Country can afford a Shilling per day to persons of the Description you give them. I put the Statement in the strongest way you can desire for your argument, for in truth the cadres do not in all amount to above 650 men, and to that complement the establishment I enclose belongs. I wish not however to dwell on such Minutiae. I beg to be understood as adverting to the Principle, not the Detail. I wish however to draw your attention, if I can, to the whole of the Subject as now circumstanced. If you had adverted to it in the light I conceive it ought to be viewed, I scarcely think you would have inserted some Expressions which have dropt from your Pen in writing your letter now before me. But whatever differences of opinion we may hold, I trust I shall ever continue to feel that I am with much Respect and Regard,

yours very sincerely

and affect^{ly}

HENRY DUNDAS.

WINDHAM TO DUNDAS.

(Add. MS. 37876, f. 218.)

THURSDAY MORN^o 25th Aug^t 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I think you have either mistaken my letter, or I have expressed myself inaccurately.

The general measure of the Reduction of the French Corps, whether Regiments or Cadres, is a measure of prudence and policy, any objections to which that I may feel may in great measure be done away by modifications of which the measure is capable, or, where they cannot be done away, may be yielded to the authority of others. All these objections and their answers I shall be most happy and desirous to discuss with you, with whom I know they will be discussed in a spirit of perfect candour and liberality.—The only point, on which, with my ideas of it, I feel it impossible to give way, is the mode proposed and actually ordered for the reduction of the Reg^{ts} of Mortemart and Castries, which I can consider as neither more nor less than a direct breach of their capitulation, and on this, when it comes to be considered, I cannot persuade myself that there can be two opinions¹.

The expense of the Cadres, at the moment when I wrote, I did not look upon to be so considerable as you state it, and as I have since found it to be. I think however that your statement is a little overdone².

I am, my dear Sir, with great truth and regard
your very Faithful Humble Servant

W. WINDHAM.

¹ persuade—opinions] altered from “that you will disagree with me.”

² at the moment—overdone] altered from “I had not considered at the moment when I wrote as amounting nearly to so much as you state. I think in fact your statement must be above the truth.”

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 111.)

[Endorsed, *Aug. circ.* 27, 1796.]

Your Letter has had the effect of powerful faith and has removed a Mountain that lay upon my Breast. I am happy that the Regiments have been saved from slaughter—and that the Cadres will receive a tolerable capitulation—tho', merciful God! is this a time to get rid of officers, or even of soldiers? But really the consolation nearest to me is that you have got out of the most difficult of all situations with honour. As things go, to prevent the worst is a great good. I really think it w^d be proper for you to have a very conciliatory, but at the same time a very serious conversation with the D. of Y., that he may be made sensible that these are not merely military or merely official arrangements, but indissolubly connected with political considerations of the highest importance.

As to my health, in which you take so kind an Interest—I believe I am quite as well as my age and foregone infirmities will ever permit me to be. The Physicians you mention are both of an ability, and one of a kindness, not to be disputed. Chalybeates have hitherto been as poisons to me. As to parties of amusement, they seem unnatural and the thoughts of them are odious to me. I shall stay here at least a week longer, if not more. That depends upon M^{rs} Burke's finding Benefit to her limbs from the Pump. She had been advised to it from the beginning, but she could not be persuaded to it, from her eagerness to attend to me beyond the necessity of the case. To be sure to have you of the Party would be to me the strongest of all inducements to the Scheme you recommend. Cazales has been a good deal out of Order, but he gets better, and is infinitely flatter'd by your remembrance. N^o 11 presents its grateful compliments to you and yours. Salute Woodford for me, and believe me with affectionate and grateful attachment

ever y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 113.)

BATH, *Sept*^r 11, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am beyond measure mortified at not being able to meet you at Oxford. But it will do, I hope, to see you at Beconsfield on your return. There I *must* be, on Wednesday at dinner; and as I cannot leave this very early on Tuesday; and as Oxford, besides a worse Road is, I am told, twenty mile about, on that Road I cannot compass my object on Wednesday. I bless God for it, I am much better; and this may be some satisfaction to the good nature of friends on a private account—but as for the publick, a fear of Enemies has multiplied them on all sides, and a desire of concealing appearances has aggravated the reality; and we seem to me to be descending to the Center of ruin with so accelerated a motion, thro' the thin medium of pusillanimity, disgrace, and humiliation, that it seems to be an attempt to fight with the established Laws of Nature to stop the course which things are taking. But on this we shall talk more when we meet. We think national and home degradation a sort of resource. God almighty bless you and preserve you from your share in the Embassy of M^r Grenville. Adieu, adieu.

Y^r unhappy but ever attach^d friend

EDM. BURKE.

The state of Windham's mind in relation to the cabinet's decisions and the mission of Lord Malmesbury to propose peace with France was not a happy one. "Council again on Russian business," he notes on 29 Sept., "decision that nothing further could be done with respect to assurances to Nelson of keeping the Fleet in the Mediterranean;" and writing to Mrs Crewe next day¹ he is in the depths of pessimism:—"Where can Pelham have got the notions which you describe?...There can be no doubt about the matter. Peace made and the Republic established, there is an end of the power, independence, government, morals, of this country, as well as of every other throughout Europe...Yet this is...what the booby politicians in this country are all wishing for and holding out as the only means by which our ruin is to be averted. It is really such a state of stupid infatuation and desperate baseness as destroys all interest in the country, and puts one, for one's relief and as the only means of escaping from the pain of one's own reflections, upon the fatal expedient of locking oneself up in insensibility and seeking one's satisfactions only from private and personal gratifications....Who is right upon the subject of Irish politics I am not competent to say. Mr B. is wrong by excess and exaggeration, I dare say; but whether he is so in the main I should much doubt." A month later he writes to the same correspondent, 31 Oct.², "Your letter is so good, such a genuine effusion of pure, virtuous feeling and native sense, that after taking away the last page, in which there is something about Irish politics, which in the intolerance of Beaconsfield might not pass, I shall send thither the remainder, as the most gratifying praise that Mr B. can receive. Do not imagine that in such a state of things I shall be induced to take a new lease of my connection with the Ministry, or do more than drag on in my present situation till I see what turn things take. If I could have been sure that Lord Malmesbury's despicable embassy would succeed, and that peace must be the immediate consequence, I should have been out long since. It does not appear to me at present, though in that one must be regulated by circumstances, that I shall ever outlive, ministerially, the arrival of a French ambassador in London. It is

¹ *Diary*, p. 341.

² *Diary*, p. 344.

enough to outlive the knowledge of an English minister in Paris. But that alone, though conclusive as to honour, is not quite so as to ruin. When the other event takes place, from that moment we go sinking, lower and lower, into Jacobinism; Mr Pitt however remaining astride of the country, unless

by some *good* chance
The strong rebuff of a tempestuous cloud
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurries us¹

either aloft or sideways, as it may happen, but with some violent concussion that may throw Mr Pitt out of his seat and substitute Mr Fox in his place, to be succeeded by Sheridan, by Horne Took, and so on through the long dynasty of murderous democrats and proconsuls of France."

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 115.)

TUESDAY [1 Nov. 1796].

MY DEAR SIR,

I was most unfortunately detain'd when you waited here two hours for me. I proposed to go to the country directly; but when you have staid so long for me, it is fit that I should wait your leisure. So here I continue this day, and am at your Service, to go to you or to receive you here, when you please. The more I think of it, the more I feel astonished that the Ministry can think of putting the whole affairs of Europe blindfold into the hands of Lord Malmesbury; and is [it] at this time they are mad enough to evacuate Corsica, and is it now that they are to look for a fleet to confront that of Spain? My head and heart are ready to split at once. Adieu.

Y^{rs} truly

EDM. BURKE.

¹ *Paradise Lost*, II. ll. 935 sqq. The quotation is not quite accurate.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 117.)

FRIDAY, *Nov. 11, 1796.*

MY DEAR SIR,

It is worth being ill to become the subject of so much indulgent and affectionate Sympathy as I have experienced from you. I think I get better ; though I threw up something from my Stomach today, and that with some difficulty, there was no blood—what came from me a day or two ago was very bloody, though without any effort at all. Dr Brocklesby¹, who came kindly to visit me, thinks nothing of that Circumstance, nor does Dr Smith, from whom I had a letter today. So it will pass off[f] I trust, and leave me where it found me, which, though it was in no very good state, is as much as I can expect. I have not been out today—and at present change of place is not very fit for me.

The City Business is curious enough. It is but a foretaste of what Mr Pitt is to expect from his mistaken Politicks at home and abroad. His favourite Commissary², who left us for Lord North, and Lord North for him, contrives a Triumph for Mr Fox over him, when he is led before the Triumphal Carr of his Enemy, cover'd over with obloquy and mud ! Oh ! but the Newspaper says, these Mobs, that drew the one and threw stones and dirt at the other, were hired Mobs. Possibly it may be so, but I am sure such hirelings would have fared but ill, if a general Sentiment, more mitigated indeed and decent, did not go with those who committed outrages.—The whole democratic corps was there. Why was that ? Ought Wooden-head to have been left to his own indiscretion ?

Indeed Mr Pitt will daily feel the effect of his leaving himself without a Cause, and without any independent and honourable support. He cannot hinder the world from feeling that when he

¹ Richard Brocklesby, M.D., an old schoolfellow of Burke's. He also attended Dr Johnson.

² Apparently Brook Watson, the new Lord Mayor ; but I am not able to explain all the allusions in this passage. The *Times* account of Lord Mayor's Day mentions that Prince Ernest's carriage was drawn by the mob to Guildhall, but says nothing of any other disturbance.

assumes Mr Foxes principles, that Mr Fox had the advantage of an earlier possession, and proposed peace when peace might clearly be made with more advantage than it can be made at present. The people, God knows, reason but little. But surely our shameful Flight from the Mediterranean must be felt as the most disgraceful Event, and possibly the most fatal, that has ever occur'd in our History. He would not suffer a spirit to be raised in favour of himself and his Measures. He will find a spirit raised against him and them, which he will endeavour in vain to resist. He will, by and by, be as ill treated in his person in London as he is by his substitute at Paris. Well! God send you all well out of this ugly scrape.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with sincere gratitude and affection
ever most truly and faithfully yours

EDM. BURKE.

WILLIAM ELLIOT TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37876, f. 251.)

Private.

DUBLIN CASTLE,

22nd November, 1796.

MY DEAR WINDHAM,

If I were conscious of having had an hour's leisure, since your letter came into my hands, I should not be able to forgive myself for having still to thank you for it ; but the arrangement of the new Corps has brought me all on a sudden into a state of communication with half the Country Gentlemen of Ireland, and has so much encreased the business of my Office, that for the last five or six weeks I have had little time left for private correspondence.

I have not however been so entirely engrossed as not to have looked with great anxiety and with great *grief* and *shame* at what has been doing in England. You will believe how sincerely I sympathize with you in your sentiments respecting this humiliating mission to Paris, by which we have abandoned the true principle of

the War, and have recognized the usurpation which it was our object to suppress. I have nevertheless considerable hopes that the pride and ambition of France will avert from us the ruin of a Peace; but if we should be saved, we shall owe our preservation to the vices of our Enemy, and not to our own virtue.

I had been led to fear, by some paragraphs in the Papers, and also by some reports which I had from private quarters, that this course of evil measures was likely to drive you from Office, but I am glad to learn from your own authority that my intelligence on this point was erroneous. If you were to quit your present connexions, and were to stand alone, the situation would certainly be dignified, but I much doubt its utility. Whilst you remain in the Cabinet you may perhaps have opportunities of correcting in some degree the spirit of Error which seems to predominate in our Councils. At least this appears to be *the only chance*; and I am sure that it is the only motive which can induce your Friends to wish that you should continue to expose yourself to such vexation as you must have lately endured.

The letters on the Regicide Peace have been published most opportunely. I have observed with great triumph and exultation the effect which they have produced here. When they were first announced in the papers, certain *wise* and *cautious* Statesmen were much shocked at the *imprudence* of the Title. The fame of the Author however compelled them to read the work, and its eloquence forced them to admire it, and now I perceive they begin, though rather reluctantly, to confess their acquiescence in the doctrine of it. I am very anxious and impatient for the sequel of it, as I am sure it will make a great impression on the publick mind, and may perhaps move the nation to a right sense of its moral and political salvation.

I shall not enter into a detail of the condition of things in this Country. You see the dispatches, and by them you perceive that the North is in a state little short of Rebellion. With regard to my own situation I shall only say that it accords very much with the idea you seem to entertain of it. It is not suitable either to my taste, my habits or my principles, and I shall endeavour to extricate myself from it after the conclusion of the Session of Parliament. *All this,*

however, I have very particular reasons for wishing may not go *further* than *yourself* and *Burke*.

I have not hitherto been able to procure any intelligence relative to Mr Brabazon Smyth, but I will make further enquiries.

Some of the Embarkation returns, which you have called for, are lost, but I send you all that we have, and I likewise send you an abstract, which was made some time ago by a Clerk in the War Office for his own private information, and which I believe contains correctly the strength of the Regiments whose Embarkation returns are missing, as it stood a few weeks previous to their Embarkation.

As the Troops which were under General White were not on this establishment, I cannot give you an exact account of the loss they sustained at Cork ; but I believe it did not exceed the statement which you will find in the enclosed note from Dr Kenny, who is at the head of the Irish Medical Board, and is a very acute, intelligent man.

I have mentioned to Lord Camden your request for leave of absence for General O'Connell¹, but it will not be granted unless he can clear up a transaction which, if the points of it are true, is certainly discreditable to him. Whilst it was understood that his Regiment was to be reduced, a Mr O'Donaghue, the Quarter-Master of the Regiment, proposed to resign his commission in favour of his Brother, and obtained General O'Connell's consent to the arrangement. The resignation accordingly took place, and General O'Connell conformably to his promise recommended O'Donaghue's Brother ; but before the appointment could be completed, he withdrew his recommendation and named his own nephew, a child of six years of age.—I send you copies of the letters on the subject that you may enquire about it.

It is now past two in the morning, and I am too tired to write more—so farewell. Pray recommend me to all my Friends but particularly to Mr and Mrs Burke, and pray tell Mr Burke that I should have written to him long ago if I had had anything good to have communicated to him. I should be very grateful to Woodford, if he

¹ Count Daniel O'Connell.

would copy your Official Bulletins and send them to me, as these anxious times make one very impatient for continental news.

Believe me with the most unalterable and unceasing attachment
most truly and affectionately yours

WILLIAM ELLIOT.

You will perceive by O'Donoughue's last letter to me, that, since it has been understood that the Brigade is not to be reduced, General O'Connell has expressed his wish that O'Donoughue should retain his Commission of Quarter-Master, as his continuance in the situation will be of essential importance to the Regiment. This circumstance however does not disperse the Cloud which hangs over the first part of the transaction, and Pelham is anxious that the matter should undergo further inquiry.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 119.)

Nov. 25, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have not been very well, for which reason I have written most of my Letters by Nagle's hand. But the little I shall say now, though from a very full heart, full near to bursting, shall be with my own—not because I distrust Nagle's prudence, nor care a farthing whether my own Sentiments are known or not, but when one tells one's private thoughts to a friend, that friend, by being the mere object of communication and passive in it, does become in some sort involved in the fault of the matter that is communicated. You know what I think of the surrender of the Kingdom of Ireland to Luttrell¹. Portugal is now given, as publick report will have it, to General Stuart². What his military Capacity may be, whether equal to that of the Gen^l we formerly gave to that Kingdom, the

¹ Henry Lawes Luttrell, 2nd Earl of Carhampton, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

² Major-General Hon. Charles Stuart, 4th son of the Earl of Bute.

Count of Lippe, I know not. It may be so—but whilst I lived in the world I never heard of the military abilities of Gen^l Stuart. Of his civil dispositions his late proceedings in our quondam Kingdom of Corsica afford a sufficient indication. This I am quite certain of, that there is something strongly redolent of madness in that family, which marks (in a general) a mischievous and malignant turn. There is great pride, great impracticability, a propensity to obscure, dark and puzzled Politicks. I look on Portugal as lost by this appointment. He certainly will not be long well with that Court and that Nation. He will despise and will quarrel with the emigrant Corps, and in their discussions it is not difficult to foresee on which side the decision of all controversies will be. We have abandoned Italy politically, commercially, morally; Spain is become our Enemy. Our Negotiation at Paris will serve no purpose, but to discover the limits of what it is we propose for the Emperor—for the accommodation of the Regicides (much abler politicians than we are) in their scheme of opening a separate treaty with him; and now our last hold of the Continent—General Stuart is to secure to us. It is all over. No experience of the fatal Effects of Jobbs will hinder Jobbers from Jobbing to the last. I say there is manifest recognized ability in the world and in our power, both at home and abroad—if we were not resolved to throw it away. I know how delicate an affair this must be to you; both as to the person doing the Jobb, and the person for whom it is done. They will say truly that all this is personal. So it is. Every question of fitness for employment is personal. But then the use and effect of that employment depend wholly on the aptitude or unfitness of the Person. I commit this delicate Business to your thoughts. But I say both nations are betrayed if this man is sent. I fear you can do nothing. God direct you. I can write no more. I am a good deal worse this day or two past.

Yours with entire and affectionate attachment

EDM. BURKE.

Wherefore write? One day's Jobb defeats the Labours of a year.

BURKE TO WOODFORD.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 121.)

BECONSFIELD, Dec^r 9, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR

The Renewal of your hopes gives us great and sincere Joy, and we hope that is only a beginning to a Satisfaction most solid and permanent. The Weather is sadly against you, as it is to all who must submit to any Operation. I have read the Debate on the Budget¹. I think Pitt was less lofty and loud in his triumph than I expected. As to Fox, he seemed in a perfect paroxysm of Rage and Fury. However, I cannot help remarking that the business of La Fayette is not at this moment brought up for nothing. I take it for granted the Ministers will negative so bold and absurd a proposition but I think the tone in which they take up the matter is very material, and I wish you would let M^r Windham know that I think so. M^r Fox has all along professed that we ought to have nothing to do with the interior affairs of another Nation, however oppressive they may [be]. Citizen La Fayette is not our fellow-subject, nor do we know of any merit he has towards this Country. If we forget his going from the King's Levée, where he was received with distinction, to kindle up a War against his Majesty in America, we may have occasion for that act of oblivion, and it may be right for us to grant it. But when we forget this, we forget all that we as Englishmen know about him. We well know what sort of subject he was to his own Sovereign, whom he three times imprisoned. We know his cruel and insolent treatment of the French Noblesse at Paris when on the 28 of Feb^y '91 they attempted with their side-arms to defend the King against one of the most atrocious attempts that was made against his Life.—Are we to forget that this man, in whose favour we want to break open the Emperor's prison, himself imprisoned the unhappy Foulon and delivered him over to a wicked gang of his Brother conspirators, who put him to Death

¹ 7 and 8 Dec. It was on the first reading of the Budget resolutions, on the 7th, that Fox raised the question of La Fayette's rigorous imprisonment by the Emperor, which was afterwards the subject of a special motion by General Fitzpatrick on 16 Dec.

with all circumstances of the most unparalleled¹ cruelty?—Are we to trouble ourselves ab^t his prison, who has been the cause of the imprisonment of more than a million of innocent victims, multitudes of whom have been dragged out of those Jails only to be massacred in a manner inferior only to the cruelty exercised upon *Foulon*²? Are we to prescribe to the Emperor what degree of resentment he should shew to any of the persons who so cruelly insulted and imprison'd one of his nearest Relations, who locked her up in a Jail at Paris, out of which she never went but to another Jail, and thence to a cruel execution? What are his merits then towards us, towards his Master and towards the Emperor? I should rather have thought that if M^r Fox was touched with the Fate of a person cruelly and against the Laws of War imprison'd, He w^d rather think of moving an Address for an instruction to Lord Malmsbury in favor of his meritorious Countryman Sir Sidney Smith³; or if he was influenced by general motives of Humanity that He would move that something might be stipulated in the treaty of Peace for the 20,000 Priests that are at this Hour kept in Prison in France, and support the proposition of La Crettelle Jun^r for their enlargement who⁴, he knows, or may know if he pleases, are in prison and ready to perish for famine. Why does he not move that Provision may be made in the treaty for the return to their country and their property of the innumerable Victims of La Fayette's rebellion, of which this country is full, and who are scattered all over Europe, a heavy tax upon the Humanity of Mankind?—But, no, there is no Person worthy the attention of a British Parliament but citizen La Fayette. With what face can M^r Fox desire a national interference with the Emperor for this man, at the very moment when He is opposing, as all along he

¹ MS. unpaired. The spelling is Nagle's; the first part of the letter is all in his hand.

² Murdered 22 July 1789. For the details see Carlyle, book v., ch. viii.

³ Taken prisoner 18 April 1796, in a privateer lugger which he had captured off Havre, the tide having carried him out of reach of his ship. The French refused to exchange him on the ground that he had destroyed the vessels at Toulon when not holding a commission. As a matter of fact Lord Malmesbury had been charged with instructions to take a strong line with the French government for Sir Sidney's release.

⁴ MS. whom.

has opposed, the grant of any Loan or subsidy or assistance whatsoever to this Our Ally? And who, in the moment of his Proposition, instead of an attempt to sooth or soften him, speaks an insulting language, such as was never heard before in this time, and before this time never would have been tolerated in relation to an Ally of this Country? I think the *manner* in which this Business is to be opposed is of very high importance, as I take it for granted there is no idea of yielding to it publickly or privately. In the name of God, what is the meaning of this project of Mr Pitt concerning the further relief of the Poor? What relief¹ do they want, except that which it will be difficult indeed to give, to make them more frugal or more industrious? I see he's running for popular plates with Mr Fox. Adieu. Forgive all this trouble. Mrs Burke cordially salutes you². I am one day better another worse. Michaelmas with all its Riggs³ is not more tempestuous than the Æolian Cave of my stomach. I find it difficult to apply to anything. Lord Malmsbury fills me with despair, or rather those who have sent him. Are they quite mad to found their Treaty on a Basis of Exchanges and mutual Cessions? Why did Mr Pitt conceal the succours he gave the Emperor? Policy required they should be as publick as possible. Why not state that he intends to give him a further subsidy?

Faithfully and aff^{ly} yours

EDM. BURKE.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 123.)

SUNDAY, Dec. 18, 1796.

Though writing, my dear Sir, is not to me the pleasantest of all operations, I should deny myself a very great pleasure, well purchased by more pain than I have in writing a few Lines, if I failed to thank you, in the name of *true* humanity, for what you

¹ MS. releif.

² At this point Burke takes up the pen himself.

³ Equinoctial gales. The word, used more than once by Burke, is quoted in the *Dialect Dictionary* as surviving in Cheshire.

have done to expose the *false and spurious*. The whole drift of this motion¹ is subservient to the general plan of making every power in alliance with this Country odious. If Mr Fox were a cheerful supporter of this alliance, and a person earnest in voting to the Emperour the amplest supplies for the assertion of the Common Cause, then it might possibly be supposed that this interposition arose from an earnest Zeal for the Emperour's honour, and the Interests of humanity. Nothing less. This alliance is, and has been from the beginning, the object of his execration. As I should have expected even from the report of your Speech in the *Sun*, the impression it made on the House was great, and decisive. Laurence told me that this impression did honour both to the speaker and to the feelings of the House, which he states to have been, on both sides, just what they ought to have been. Nothing can exceed the Ability of that Speech; and it was necessary it should be so; as no over abundant Zeal was shewn for the general Cause of sovereign powers by those who had spoken before you. I do not think it was necessary to be over earnest in disclaiming any part that our Court was guessed to have had in that transaction. For the sake of Truth it might be disclaimed; but not as an imputation w^{ch} would have reflected disgrace on our Court if it had been true. Some philosopher (not of modern Paris) on hearing a Hymn of some Poet to Diana, wished that the Poet should be rewarded with a Daughter resembling the Diana he had described. I am sure that any Prince taking an Interest in Citizen La Fayette well deserves that he should find so loyal a subject and so faithful a Commander of his Guards and such an active protector of himself and his family as Citizen La Fayette! What a Folly was the precedent of Asgil²? Was Asgil a person

¹ General Fitzpatrick's, for an address praying for intervention in favour of La Fayette.

² Captain Charles Asgill, afterwards 2nd Baronet. He was taken prisoner in the American War, 1781, and chosen by lot from among the prisoners for retaliation, in order to enforce Washington's demand for the surrender of Lippincott, who had executed a Republican, Joseph Huddy, by order of a committee of loyalists. The British authorities repudiated the execution of Huddy and instituted an enquiry into Lippincott's responsibility. Louis XVI was induced to intervene in Asgill's favour with Washington, who seems however to have already decided, as a result of the enquiry, upon Asgill's release.

who had rebelled against any Sovereign? Had Asgil imprison'd, and delivered over to Hangmen, any of the Queen of France's relations? He was an innocent Gentleman without a pretence of Crime, taken out by Ballot from some English Prisoners by General Washington to be made a subject of retaliation. Compare the Cases. Nothing but Mr Foxes wild enthusiasm for the Revolution in France could make him think of the Case as a precedent. As to the pair of Wretches¹ taken with this La Fayette, they are (if possible) more detestable Ruffians than he.

The Fact is, that the minority here must consider the *mere fact of Rebellion* to be the most transcendent of all merit. Be it so, with them, if they please. But is that a plea that is likely to be prevalent with Sovereigns? However, I shall always take it as an infallible criterion of the principles and dispositions of any men of our time, that they think a rebellion against such a prince as Louis the 16th, and at the moment too when he was making immense sacrifices of his power to the establishment of order and Liberty, to be the most meritorious of all actions, or an action of any merit at all. God save me from falling into the merciful hands of those who think the Business of Foulon and Bertier no act of cruelty. God save you from their humanity and compassion. This has been a very bad day with me. But I have begun to work. I see I must fortify myself on the point of the Nation's ability to prosecute the War. I would not wish however to call much attention to the collection of materials I wish you [to] procure for me. I think they may easily be had at the Excise and Customs. I don't at all like the way in which I left poor Woodford. I confess I feel alarmed for him. His cure seems more dangerous even than the distemper. Again and again I congratulate you on your manliness.

Ever truly y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

¹ La Tour Maubourg and Bureau de Pusy.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. IV. 401.)

PARK STREET, WESTMINSTER,
December 20, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope in future, and so long as writing shall continue painful, you will never abate my satisfaction in the receipt of your letters by the reflection of their not (*sic*) being written in your own hand. Expressions so kind, and approbation so flattering, can never fail to be welcome, in whatever hand they may be conveyed.

The speech which you so obligingly commend is a source to me of satisfaction, from better considerations than any opinion that I entertain of its merit. In that respect it is of as little consequence as need be. But its effect has been beyond both its merit and any expectation that I could have formed from it; and is a strong proof of what may be done with the public mind, and how easily men may be made to think and feel rightly, in innumerable cases where at present they do not, were reason fairly applied to them. You cannot conceive how many people I have had who have thanked me for speaking their sentiments; and what a quantity of right disposition there has appeared upon this question, which would have absolutely languished and died, and been lost, both now and for ever, if it had not been revived, and animated, and sustained in life by this seasonable encouragement and protection. All that I have to regret is, that, out of respect to others' cold caution, and from fear of meddling with a subject not absolutely my own, I abstained from saying anything on the situation of Sir Sydney Smith, whose case seemed created for the purpose of confounding those who, being wholly indifferent about him, were thus anxious for the fate of a stranger, known only by his treason to his own sovereign.

Wilberforce, as you will perceive, appeared in his full lustre. What a state is a country in, whose treasures are to be guided by such counsellors! There was a part, that I meant against him and such *Simulars of Virtue*, that I am afraid did not receive its proper application, and was very probably not repeated in the papers.

It might be understood of some higher personages than he. Upon the whole, this speech, though nothing in itself, has done knight's service, by counteracting that chapter of a sentimental novel, for such Fitzpatrick's speech was, to which the House was about to sacrifice its character, its policy, and its justice.

By accounts received today, that tyrant ally, against whom every presumption is to be admitted, is going on rendering nearly as much service to mankind as Wilberforce would do by his humanity ; and in [?] pushing the war with all possible vigour and success, both in Italy and on the side of Kehl. I enclose you the official report. There is at least the hope that if peace must be made, it will be upon terms so disadvantageous to France, as, besides diminishing their means and their authority, will put people so much out of conceit of the government, as to facilitate any endeavours that may be made to put things into a better state.

I will do the best I can about your queries, and am ever

My dear sir, most faithfully yours

W. WINDHAM.

BURKE TO WINDHAM.

(Burke Corr. iv. 404.)

BECONSFIELD, *December 23, 1796.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I make use of the saturnalian liberty with which you have indulged your Davus at the close of this December. I write with the hand of my friend and kinsman Nagle, who has indeed been very helpful to me. His brother, a captain-lieutenant in Mahony's chasseurs, whom you had seen at the Duke of York's head-quarters, and who, we conceived, had been killed, is now reported to be somewhere alive and a prisoner. I give no great credit to the report, because, had he been alive, I think he must

have found some way of letting his friends (though he might be afraid of making known his connexion with me) have some intelligence of his situation. The report arises from a letter written by Count Mahony himself to his brother in Ireland, the very day before the Count was killed. I never heard before this time of Colonel Mahony having been killed, and therefore the date of the letter (of which I have not been informed) might go something towards clearing the way for further inquiry into the fate of this young man.

Perhaps they may know something of the time at the Duke of York's office, or at my Lord Grenville's, or from the secretary of Count Starembergh¹. If no intelligence can be had here (which I think the most likely), could you prevail upon Mr Canning to write to Colonel Crawford, or his brother, to set on foot an inquiry on this subject? for I shall be very well pleased to find this worthy creature, in whom I took a very great interest, alive.

I have been looking in vain for a curious print, which I had in my hand yesterday. It is concerning the imprisonment of La Fayette. It is far from ill-executed. It was torn from a small pocket-book, called the *Minor's Pocket-book* for the year 1797, to which it served as a frontispiece. It is printed for Darton and Harvey, Gracechurch-street; it fronts a narrative, said to be taken from a monthly magazine. It is, as you will see, a neat abstract of General Fitzpatrick's speech, and finds nothing about Monsieur de la Fayette worth relating, except the suffering of his family under Robespierre; and his exile in consequence of an attempt to save the life of Louis the Sixteenth. I mention this, to let you see with what art and system this business is worked up, and that the sentimental novel is, in reality, a political contrivance, that has some more meaning than the display of a hypocritical humanity. Why should it not be a pretty subject for a series of prints like the "Rake's Progress," or the "Harlot's Progress," to give the *Rebel's Progress*, in which the heroic exploits and various fortunes of citizen La Fayette might make an useful moral lesson to all English generals, who might be inclined to imitate at home what they so greatly admire in their friend abroad? By the way, I totally forgot from whom it was

¹ Imperial Minister in London.

I heard a very accurate detail of the attempt made, with great regularity and well-combined contrivance, by Mr Church and others of the Fox party here, to effect the escape of that suffering hero from Olmutz. I heard the name of the physician who was sent to Vienna for the purpose, though I do not recollect it¹. He was a young physician of London, and insinuated himself so well into the good graces of some persons of importance in the imperial court, that when Mons. de la Fayette, having had his cue, sent to Vienna to request, if possible, the assistance of an English physician, in whose skill alone he pretended to have any confidence, this emissary was sent to him without any difficulty. The governor of the castle had the humanity to permit La Fayette, upon the doctor's representation of the necessity of air and exercise for his cure, to go out in an open chaise with him for several days together; until, all things being settled for the escape, two horses were provided, upon one of which the doctor mounted, and gave the other, with cash for his journey, to the prisoner. The doctor got clear off; but the other, falling into confusion and tumbling from blunder into blunder, was discovered and carried before a Magistrate, who delivered him over to the governor. This was the date of any unusual closeness and rigour in his confinement; and was the cause, as I take it, of the precautions that are taken with regard to the entry and exit of all persons who may visit him in his prison. It is right, of course, that persons who have attempted to make their escape should be guarded with double vigilance. I wish you would ask Laurence whether he recollects from whom I had this detailed account, and the name of the physician who was the principal actor in the business. Nagle seems to think he has read some short account of it in a newspaper; but it is rather extraordinary, if it had been thus published, that Fitzpatrick should have taken no notice of it, either to refute the story, if it were public and not true, or to repel the inferences which would arise, in order to diminish the effect of his tragical tale.

I think that the substance of what you have said, relative to the humanity of politicians of the first or second order, is touched in the

¹ The real agents in La Fayette's unsuccessful attempt were an American, Francis Kinloch Huger, and a German physician, Dr Bollmann.

account given of your speech in the *Sun*; and to me, the application was very intelligible. As to Mr Pitt's speech, there was nothing at all in it, but a dry point of law. Nothing was said but what might have been urged if the case had been that of the most innocent, virtuous and meritorious sufferer that had ever experienced the severity of fortune. I am sure that the faction will not let the matter rest here. I thank you for the *bulletin*; but on considering the whole matter, I think things still in a very trembling balance, and the final result of the campaign still very doubtful. It is plain that the Austrians were surprised at Kehl; and that it was rather an escape than a victory. For God's sake, why is the subsidy (or whatever it is) to the Emperor reduced to £500,000, when the King of Prussia, who had much less need of it, and did much less for it, had fourteen hundred thousand a year, not as a loan, but as a subsidy? I am afraid we have too much in view a little fallacious economy, which is, in war, little less than madness. I am afraid, too, that we conduct war upon the principles of favouritism, and that we feed the objects of our affections at the expense of our interests. I see nothing said of a provision for the army of Condé, which has stood the brunt of the war upon that side. The death of the Empress of Russia seems to be a sad *contretemps*. What will become of the French enterprize against Portugal, is now the first object of anxiety. One sees that an active use of the smallest force may keep in check, and possibly baffle, the greatest which chooses to act upon the mere defensive,—a part always unsuitable to great force. Oh! how open to us was the French and Spanish force at Cadiz!—of which place, at the beginning of this century, we knew the value—active enterprize directed against an enemy in his weak points. That expedition failed from causes so evident, that a knowledge of them might have assured against a second failure. The defeat of that expedition, not abating the vigour of enterprize, gave us the glorious success at this very Vigo. In itself this event was great, and might have been improved into anything; but as long as the war is conducted on its present principles, our proceedings, at their best, can only baffle some particular design of an enemy. They can never be followed up so as vitally to affect him. I pray to God for the success of

Admiral Colpoys¹; but I do not like, after having expended more on the navy (perhaps twice as much as in any former war), that in the two most essential naval ports of Europe we should be fairly out-numbered by them. I believe that this Brest fleet is contemptibly equipped and manned; and hardly able to stand an engagement, or even the sea and sky; but as to this latter, they have the advantage of the finest and most opportune ports in the world to run into; so that, if they should miss Vigo, they may get into Ferrol or Corunna, where they may join the Spanish force intended against Portugal, with nearly the same effect as from Vigo itself. Alas! Europe, for us, hardly opens one hospitable port. Adieu!

Things at St Domingo seem to have something of a pleasanter aspect, but they are owing rather to the dissensions of the barbarians themselves, than to any efforts of ours, which amount to no more than a poor and uncertain defence of a line too long, too poorly manned, to be of any real strength. I should have great satisfaction however in this glimmering, if I did not know, with all the rest of the world, that the final effect of our success or defeat will be nearly the same; and that we are spilling the blood of those planters whom we had refused to protect, until they had become our subjects, as well as the best blood of our own, and of the royalists of Europe, to make this a more savoury morsel for the regicides. You will have the goodness to excuse this letter, made up of the wanderings of an anxious mind inhabiting a feeble body; which dictates its dreams, whilst it is stretched all its low length upon the couch of inaction.

I am glad to find that poor Woodford seems, to himself at least, to mend. Poor Lord John Cavendish, who very kindly came to see me a day or two before his death, is gone a little before me. The world never produced a more upright and honourable mind; with very considerable talents, and a still more considerable improvement of them. He retired from the world exceedingly irritated at the triumph of his enemies, which was carried pretty high against him personally; and somewhat disgusted with the coldness of his friends,

¹ Rear-Admiral John Colpoys, commanding in the channel. He was afterwards at Spithead and St Helen's at the time of the mutinies, and saved the life of his first lieutenant at imminent risk of his own.

who, at that time, showed little energy of mind, and considered his retreat with too much indifference. No more last words of M^r Baxter, but that I am most zealously and most affectionately

Yours, &c. &c.

EDM. BURKE.

P.S.—I have found the print and send it to you enclosed.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. iv. 412.)

December 24, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I cannot refuse myself the satisfaction of informing you, that the news that you will see in the papers is true, and that Lord Malmesbury is about to spend a happy Christmas with his friends in London; having received, *pour toute réponse* to his terms, a declaration that the republic could enter into no treaty for countries attached by the constitution to France, and an order to quit France in eight-and-forty hours. His exit will be as splendid as his entry. He affords a brilliant example of the manner in which the ambassadors of suppliant kings should be treated by a high-minded republic.

So should desert in arms be crowned!

I fear however this new humiliation will only animate us to [persevere] with new expedients and contrivances of meanness. At present, to be sure, every avenue seems to be shut. We must go on with the war perforce. But I much doubt whether even this necessity, and the privation of all other means, will put us upon making any use of the good dispositions of the interior. I have much to say to you upon that: but I have already perhaps said more than I ought, considering how ardently I ought to be supposed to wish for peace, even with the power with which we thought it necessary that every country ought to be at war.

Yours, dear sir, in great haste

W. W.

BURKE TO WINDHAM¹.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 125.)

BEACONSFIELD, 25 Decr, 1796.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind Letter. The return of Lord Malmsbury is just in all its circumstances what it ought to be, and indeed just what might be expected. This Mongrel has been whipped back to the Kennel yelping and with his Tail between his Legs. This will be a great triumph of Ministry, of Opposition, and of the Nation at large. The Opposition only will be true to its principles. Woeful fidelity and consistency, when such are the principles. The rest will certainly fail on the tryal. Indeed they have so much relyed on the certainty of Peace, and have provided, if for any War, only a War at Home, that I do not see how they can carry on any other with energy and effect. However, anything is better than a Jacobin Peace. In every other posture of things there are at least chances. I am quite sure that notwithstanding all that Lord Malmsbury has suffered, both as a Negotiator and as a Gentleman, that in order to justify himself in his first step, kicked in as he has been and kicked out, He will still in the House of Lords hold out some sort of Hopes. He will endeavour to keep open to himself a road to some such infamous employment in future. You know better than I do, who know nothing of the subject, what is to be done with the *Interiour* of France, but of this I am sure, if nothing can be done there, nothing can be done with effect anywhere. Unfortunately we have disabled ourselves of our best means, by sending the French Royalists to Portugal, but that is no fault of yours, who advized that measure in order to save these unhappy Corps from being broke as Criminals with every sort of disgrace, or sent with equal disgrace and with every sort of other ill consequence to the West Indies. God Almighty bless you and support you in the endeavours which yet you will make use of for the salvation of your Country and of betrayed Europe. For two Days I had recovered

¹ In Nagle's hand.

(except in my flesh, which continues under a uniform decay) to my astonishment, so that I hoped to resume my task with vigour, but last Night my disorder returned on me with violence, and to-Day I am as ill as ever.

By the way is it quite sure that the French squadron and force are going at all to Portugal, and may not the Brazils be their object, or something in America or the West Indies? I hope your Intelligence is good. Once more, adieu. The cordial wishes of this Season from all this House to you and the accomplished Ladies of your Family, of whose partiality for us we are more proud than that of a whole Academy of Letters.

Ever most devotedly yours

EDM. BURKE.

CHAPTER VII.

BURKE'S LAST DAYS. THE NAVAL MUTINY.

ON 17 Dec. 1796, five days before Lord Malmesbury's dismissal from Paris, the French fleet of forty-four ships had left Brest, carrying Hoche and his army of 18,000 men on their way to Ireland. The story of their complete defeat by the weather, with slight aid from the British Navy, cannot be told here. Thirteen ships were lost (six by capture) and the last of those which survived returned to a French port on 14 Jan. February, notable in naval annals for the victory off Cape St Vincent, was marked also by the mistaken treatment accorded by the Admiralty authorities to a petition sent in to Lord Howe by the seamen of the fleet for an advance of pay. They seem to have regarded it as the work of an external organisation, in which they may have been right, and as not representing any real widespread feeling among the men, in which they were certainly wrong; and no notice was therefore taken of it. The consequence was seen on 15 April, when the new commander of the Channel Fleet at Spithead gave orders to prepare for sea and the men refused. Two days later a committee of delegates drew up petitions to the Admiralty and to Parliament.

BURKE TO WINDHAM¹.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 127.)

Jan. 5, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have had two very bad days; this last the worst. So that I cou'd not work much even if I had the materials. This difficulty at the Excise Office I wish I had foreseen; because while

¹ Not in Burke's hand.

Parliament was sitting any Member might have moved for those accounts. I never knew them refused. I should have no difficulty of writing to Mr Long¹ myself upon the Subject, but I do not wish to have my Scheme blown upon, and I know there is such a connection between the Public Offices and the News-Papers, that they would have the accounts full as early as I should. It is a vile thing to see this communication constantly kept open, and as constantly disowned. The use that I intend to make of these accounts, if they come up to my Ideas, as I think they will, is to finish my demonstration: That no class of the People hath as yet felt the War in any sort of Privation. I am infinitely rejoiced to hear that poor Woodford goes on with good appearances.

If Ireland was the Object of the Brest Armament (and it now looks not improbable), what handsome provision has been made for its defence! No Depot of Force in any Central point. No preconcerted arrangement. Agamemnon² General in the South with Cooks for his Aid de Camps; and so corpulent, that I am told he cannot go on Horseback: had Hoche landed in Bantry Bay, or in any Bay more commodious for his purposes, as many there are on that coast, nothing could have hindered him from making himself master of Cork; of putting that place under Contribution of Money and provisions, and having routed the weak force in that part, from Marching forward and beating all the rest in detail. The apparent want of intelligence of the Enemy's design was truly deplorable; but if intelligence was received and credited, that the Enemy's design pointed at Ireland, in the name of God, how did it happen that no Fleet was off Ireland, to oppose the Enemy on his approach, or, on failure, to intercept him on his return? While the Jacobin Fleet was at Anchor in Bantry Bay, Lord Bridport was at Portsmouth, and Colpoys, after going God knows where, returns himself into harbour. The French leave Bantry on the 27th of Dec^r, and Lord Bridport sails from Portsmouth to look for them on the 3rd of this month; if he meets any of them it is a miracle, and it

¹ Charles Long, afterwards Baron Farnborough, Joint Secretary to the Treasury. The statistics were wanted for the *Third Letter on a Regicide Peace*.

² ? General William Dalrymple.

must be owing to the terrible condition which they are in. So much for Intelligence, Foresight and Precaution.

For my own part, I never believed that the French could have thought of Ireland, equipped as they were in such a Tempestuous Season; because I could have no intelligence, and only grounded myself upon conjecture of what it would have been rational for them to do. I therefore concluded that they would get into the Ocean as soon and as deep as they could, and make their way for Nova Scotia, - an Object infinitely important for them to possess. The Season of the Year is I know adverse also for this; but nothing cou'd be worse for them than the Coast of Ireland, where they cou'd not remain long without being a Prey to the English Naval force, let their successes on Land be what they wou'd. But the fate of that expedition (*sic*) is, I trust, now decided by an Arm stronger than ours, and by a Wisdom capable of counteracting our Folly.—Yet, my dear Friend, I do tremble, lest the boldness of these men in risking every thing, and our Negligence or Misfortune in not providing for any thing, may not always find the Heavens so propitious. I confess I tremble at the danger, whilst I am rejoicing in the escape. However I sincerely congratulate you upon it. I consider you so much as a Friend, to whom I am used to disburthen myself, that I forget I am writing to a Minister, with whom I ought to have managements when I discuss anything relative to the conduct of his Colleagues. The want of a steady intelligence both from Paris and from Brest is a thing I cannot comprehend; because I am sure it might have been obtained. God bless you. I am very faint, and perhaps peevish, but ever most truly yours

E. B.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. iv. 424.)

PARK ST., WESTMINSTER, *Jan.* 17, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

What I have understood of the state of your health for some time past, and still more what I understand at this moment, must supersede all that unwillingness to obtrude my advice upon you, that has often restrained me, and make me urge my entreaties and remonstrances with a degree of earnestness that I have never hitherto allowed myself, but which the importance and urgency of the case will no longer suffer me to forbear.

You must really, my dear sir, come fairly to the point of deciding, in the first instance, whether you *wish* to recover. If life is really become so insipid or painful that you are really impatient for the scene to close, and if you can reconcile that wish with the interest you feel in the happiness of some of those whom you will leave behind, or with the conviction which you cannot fail to entertain, that your life is at this moment of more consequence than that, probably, of any other man now living, or than it has been at any preceding period (suppositions which I merely make for the sake of form, and without a suspicion that they can all of them be true), then, indeed, there is no room for further discussion. It is in vain to urge a resort to such means as human precaution and prudence may point out, if the end which they are to obtain is not wished.

But if such is not the case; if duty, though not inclination, must enjoin to you the preservation of a life which cannot cease but to the infinite affliction of those whose happiness is most dear to you, and with a loss to the world such as it could never have produced, or been known at least to produce, at any other period, then surely you will not have acted up to your own ideas, or to the expectations which others would have reason to form of you, if you persist in resisting those means, uncertain as they may be, which in the judgment of any persons tolerably skilled may afford you any means of relief. Such means have certainly not been wanting; nor, should the first fail, were others to be despaired of, had there been a fair

disposition to go in search of them. But in fact the first had not failed. Bath, which every one had agreed to recommend—Bath, the most simple and ready and easily resorted to—Bath had been tried and succeeded on the trial to the full extent that had been hoped. Can you, my dear sir, justify it to yourself, can you justify it to your friends and those most dear to you, that you have suffered yourself to be diverted by a repugnance founded on nothing but a dislike of what you call going into public, to defer a repetition of that remedy, till your disorder has now gained such ground, that no one certainly can pretend to rely with equal confidence on the power of Bath water to stop it?

At all events let that, or whatever else may be thought preferable, be tried without delay. I beg only and claim, in the name of myself and of those whose claim must necessarily be far stronger, that you will take without an instant's delay the best advice, and follow implicitly what that advice shall recommend. For this purpose, if you will not consent to come up to town, I shall set off on Thursday, (the Birth-day must prevent my going tomorrow,) and if you do not forbid it, endeavour to bring down Dr Blane¹, in whom I feel a considerable confidence, with me. Should he be of opinion with the rest, then Bath is that which promises best. I shall be ready, putting off an excursion, that I had some slight thoughts of, into Norfolk, but to which however there were several objections, to accompany you thither as soon as you please, and to stay with you till the meeting of parliament. I shall endeavour also, before I come, to see Dr Warren.

My dear Sir, though I hope and trust that your last decay of flesh and strength is no more than that which you experienced previously to your going to Bath first, and may be recovered by the same means, I should certainly never think it necessary in talking to you to dissemble any part of my apprehensions. It is on the contrary in consequence of those apprehensions that I am thus urgent, and thus solemnly adjure you, that you would suffer no time to be lost.

¹ Gilbert Blane, physician to George IV, both as Prince of Wales and as King; created a baronet in 1812.

My fear of being too late for the post obliges me to close this without saying more ; nor do I know indeed what more could be said. The reason of the case lies in a very small compass. That I have said so much is the result only of that earnest affection with which

I am, my dear sir,

Most faithfully and anxiously yours

WM. WINDHAM.

WINDHAM TO ADDINGTON.

(Add. MS. 37876, f. 298.)

BATH, *Feb^y* 6th, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I had actually written a letter to you, proposing, in case of your being at home and disengaged, to have the pleasure of dining with you ; but the fear of being detain'd in London by some unforeseen accident made me forbear to send it, and unwillingness afterwards to call upon you on a sudden, so late in the day as the time at which I found myself opposite to Woodley, made me "turn the unwilling steeds another way," and resign an opportunity w^{ch} I had much counted upon, and w^{ch} I fear it will be difficult to replace in my return to London.

Mr Burke, to whom I shall deliver your obliging message, is as well as I had any reason to expect, and so far better that his Physician does not appear to think so ill of him as most of those whom he had consulted, or who had been consulted about him in London. It is however a very ambiguous and a very doubtful case, and cannot fail to cause much anxiety to all who, like yourself, feel the respect due to his virtues and talents, and the value of his life at a crisis of human affairs such as the present.

This crisis, by the last dreadful acc^{ts}, becomes more and more alarming. It is plain that as long as the enemy *can* go on, they will never abandon their schemes of Universal Empire, and, as part of that scheme, their views for the destruction of this Country. If the

Republick subsists, this Country must in my opinion be ultimately destroy'd. The existence of a Republick in France on the principles on w^{ch} this has been establish'd, and will continue to act, does not seem to me to be compatible with the continuance of Monarchies in countries adjoining; but they wish the destruction of this country beyond that of all others, and upon motives that apply to every feeling of their minds, old or new. I do not say that it is impossible that peace may be made with the Republick, and yet this country not be undone, because peace and the continuance of the Republick *may* not be the same thing. It is the final compatibility of the two, that is of a Republick in France and Monarchy here, that seems to me so impossible.

The inference to be drawn from this opinion, supposing the opinion itself to be admitted, may be disputable. It may be said that the prospect of destroying the Republick by War is less than of its falling to pieces of itself in peace; or that at all events our own chance of preservation by peace is better than by attempting longer to maintain the War. My opinions are not yet alter'd upon that Subject, even if peace on the best terms on which we have ever hoped to have it were in our power; but in fact all discussion seems likely to be spared upon that point, for the enemy will not give us peace. It is a *Bellum Inter[ne]cinum*, whether we will or no; and as it now appears (as it might have done always) that a fleet cannot protect us against Invasion, and as the Rampart formerly establish'd for our protection in the Royalist armies is now levelled with the ground, they will transfer this war, whenever a separate peace with the Emperor or great success against his armies shall leave them at liberty, to be carried on upon our own shores. Fatal would seem to be that error, which supposed that there could be any compromise with this power, and that we could at any time purchase a peace by the sacrifice of part of our possessions; in this hope we pursued conquests with the sacrifice of our army; but the conquests, so far as they were made, having fail'd to effect the purpose intended by them, we now find ourselves in the deplorable state of being obliged to fight after our Weapons are gone. The War continues but we have no longer an Army.

If all this would animate us to right sentiments and inspire us with what I cannot but think right opinions; if it would be the means of putting the war upon its proper footing, and make us join hand and heart in co-operating with those of the Interior of France to overturn this System; then indeed I should think that good might grow out of this evil; but as I have no such expectation I can only view the present state of things with very despondent feelings and yield myself up with a sort of blind insensibility to the fate that seems to await us.

Yours, dear Sir, very truly,

W. WINDHAM.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. iv. 427.)

February 11, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR

I write this from Reading, where I arrived in time to have proceeded to the Speaker's, from whom I have found a note, offering me a bed, and informing me that I should probably meet Mr Pitt there. I feel however more disposed at present to remain where I am; and I should besides have lost the opportunity of shooting back this Parthian arrow at you. I shall join them in the morning, and try my hand, but with little prospect of the effect it will produce, to raise our counsels to some nobler pitch than any they have flown to hitherto. We soar no Pindaric heights; and I am afraid are now likely to sink lower and lower, and never to rise again in the face of this Gallic falcon.

My hopes are in you and General Hoche. The recipes are rather of an opposite nature, but may conspire to the same end. To realize one part of them, as well as for every reason, public and private, let me entreat you, my dear sir, to avail yourself of whatever skill and prudence can do for your recovery, and as a main article

of that prudence at present, to put yourself fairly in the hands of Dr Parry¹.

With best respects to Mrs B. and compliments to all who are with you,

I am, my dear sir,

Your most faithful and affectionate humble servant

W. WINDHAM.

BURKE TO WINDHAM².

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 135.)

BATH, 12 Feb^y [1797].

MY DEAR FRIEND

How can I find thanks any way proportioned to your unwearied kindness? I must be silent and restrain my bursts of gratitude, as you desire me to restrain the bursts of my stomach. In the latter I will do what I can. I received your Letter when I was half the channel over in Mr Erskine's Pamphlet³, which would have landed me safely in a good harbour of the Republick one and indivisible, and that too, as Mr Erskine says, upon my own principles. The Pamphlet is better written and less full of Vanity than I expected to find it; but it is the old matter new hashed up. France would have been very good if she had not been provoked by the wickedness of Great Britain and other powers, who are confederates not against her Ambition but against her Liberty. That she was right in every point and at all times and with all Nations. That the cure for all disorders consists in your making your Representation at home as like hers as possible—in making Peace with her by giving her all that you offer and all that she demands. That by excluding her from all the Continental powers she will become well disposed to you; and that you and she will become Guardians of Liberty throughout

¹ Charles Henry Parry, a well-known Bath physician.

² Not in Burke's hand.

³ *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the present War with France*, by Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord Erskine.

the world. And as for our safety, it will be perfect, provided we do nothing to provoke that irresistible power. And lastly, in which alone I think with him, that for making such a peace it is proper that Mr Fox and his friends should come into power. I think this is a just Analysis¹ of Mr Erskine's Pamphlet, which he says he has formed on my opinions, not with relation to France but with relation to America. I am to observe, once for all, that these Gentlemen put the case of France and America exactly upon a Par, and always have done so. I leave them to rejoice in that discovery, and in my inconsistency, and the antidote they have found in one part of my writings against the poison that exists in another. You will observe that *their* alliance with France and a change in this Constitution are things that always go hand in hand, and I think consistently enough. The only point upon which he is strong, but on which I don't think he makes the most, is Mr Pitt's having refused to make proffers of Peace whilst our affairs were in a prosperous condition, when [alone?] he allows that any Peace at all can be made with the Regicide powers that is likely to be safe and lasting. But Mr Pitt unfortunately is in the condition of "Paulo purgante;"—He cannot make Peace and he will not make War. "Deus dabit his quoque finem," which I believe I will not live to see. I wish [I] may live to make my final protest against the proceedings of both factions. God bless you, and preserve you to better times, for which bettering of the times your preservation may be very essential. I continue just as I was, with the difference of a bad Night. Doctor Parry has just given me a purgative medicine, and I assure you I implicitly obey his directions. I cannot yet walk or stand firm, but I can read upon my back and dictate, as I do now, whilst all the great hunters are driving their spears into a dead Boar. Once more God bless you, and for the few moments I have to live, believe me devotedly

Yours

EDM. BURKE.

¹ The spelling is that of the amanuensis.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. IV. 429.)

FRIDAY, SIX O'CLOCK, Feb. 17, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

You may imagine what our anxiety is, when your fate almost may hang upon the report which each day may bring. Dr Parry's opinion has every air of being right. God grant that your strength may hold out, so as to give a fair chance to the course he is pursuing.

In such a state of uncertainty about what is so infinitely precious, one has no heart to talk much about other things; I should otherwise like to tell you that the paper which villainy has thus brought out¹ is received in a manner which could leave you nothing to regret, but the havoc it is making with the character and credit of Mr Fox. One hardly knows what to wish upon that subject; but with respect to you, nothing can be more satisfactory. Mr Pitt, with whom I first saw it, when we met at the Speaker's, was not only highly gratified with it (more perhaps than one would wish him to be), but thought it a model of the sort of style in which it was written; and which by the way, when it suits the subject, is more forcible than any other, and always accords more with the general taste.

Another satisfactory circumstance, which I should like to dilate to you, in the midst of an ocean of calamity, is the manner in which the fatal reverses in Italy have been received at Vienna. No despondency, no change or relaxation of purpose; a determination to pursue the war to the last extremity.

The secretary of Sir Charles Whitworth too, who is come over from Petersburg, gives hopes of the Emperor of Russia. But of that, when you hear that he is an *illuminé*, your hopes, any more than mine (notwithstanding many favourable circumstances), will not be sanguine.

Ever, my dear sir, most faithfully yours

W. WINDHAM.

¹ A private letter of Burke's to Portland in 1793, published in 1797 by an unauthorised person under the title of *Fifty-four Articles of Impeachment against the Right Hon. C. J. Fox*. It is printed, with its proper title, *Observations on the Conduct of the Minority*, etc., in the *Works* (ed. 1852, vol. v. p. 68).

LADY SPENCER TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37845, f. 155.)

WIMBLEDON, *April 20th*: '97.

MY DEAR MR WINDHAM,

Lord Spencer in a note I have just rec^d bids me tell you that to his heart he feels your friendship and affection in the offer you have made to him of going to Portsth to share with him the difficulties of the sad, sad situation he is involved in at that alarming post. So hurried is he, that he has not a moment to express to you the thanks he owes you, but has desired *me* to convey them to you. He thinks you need not distress yourself by coming to him and being a witness to the terrifying scene now passing under his eyes—for that you cou'd do no good as to the quieting the men, and that as to himself he is so taken up by business, that he knows not if a moment cou'd be passed in so pleasant a way, as it wou'd be were you to go to him.—Alas! my dear Sir, we none of us know the end of this most awful affair. Lord S. writes in very low spirits but “Hope travels through, nor leaves us till the last” as he says—and let us hold her fast while we may. Dundas, whom I have just seen, seems full as serious on the business as I am, and truly there is food for thought in the present prospect of things. The quietness of the men, tho' comfortable in some respects, yet in others is most alarming—it proves a steadiness in them to accomplish their object, which overpowers *me*, whatever it may do other people. They at first agreed to be satisfied with L^d Sp.'s concessions, but then got off again by insisting on including the Marines—a most artful subterfuge! By making this hitherto useful body of men a party in their demands they ensure *their* concurrence in all of them. Thus situated, what can be done to reduce this rebellious Spirit, I can not foresee. Of course their demands have gone on increasing, and Lord S. tells Dundas he can grant no more than he has done already, as he *now* feels responsible for more than he shall feel comfortable under untill he is sanctioned by Parliament. That a Mutiny of this extent shou'd

¹ Endorsed, Received, Bath, 22nd.

have been brewing for 3 months, and not one word of it to have transpired, is most wonderful. Surely, surely it implies a strange want of knowledge amongst the Officers.—Sir And. Douglas's illness has been the cause of the whole I do believe. An Acting Captain was put into the Q. Charlotte in the meanwhile, and *they* never have the influence, or the wish to act, as the real Captain would do in cases of this sort. Then the Queen's is a most dreadful crew, owing to the childish fondness for his men of Sir Allan Gard[ner].—He excuses faults no other man would do, from a culpable wish not to do harm to any one belonging to him or his ship—foolish man! And then the Q. Charlotte was Lord Howe's Ship!—I dare say no more even to you—but indeed Benevolence is a hard virtue to practice now-a-days. I know not if you will understand me or my letter but I am just now a good deal agitated, and unfit to write coherently.—God alone is to be looked to as our refuge. May He in his Mercy, and for his blessed Son's sake, give us help and assistance. Alas! we pray to Him in our adversities—do we acknowledge him sufficiently in our prosperities? My dear Mr W. *Mon cœur est sur mes lèvres* when I write or speak to you, and you are good enough to excuse one—but I only write to *you*. Adieu.

The committee over which Spencer presided sat at Portsmouth from the 18th to the 23rd and agreed to recommend to Parliament what was practically a concession of the men's terms, and were able also to promise a pardon to the mutineers. The men returned to duty, but still with some misgivings as to the sincerity of the promises; and the mutiny broke out again at St Helen's on 7 May, only to be pacified by the arrival of Lord Howe, with an Act of Parliament for the increased wages and a proclamation of the King's pardon, on the 14th.

WINDHAM TO BURKE.

(Burke Corr. iv. 439.)

FULHAM, *Apr.* 25, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR

I cannot help troubling you with a few lines to enforce the purpose which you appeared to have formed when I left you,— of putting out a short letter on the measures necessary to be taken for the immediate safety of the country; or, at least, with a view to anything like a successful termination of the war. The danger is coming thundering upon us, and, as far as I can perceive, will find us miserably unprepared, in means as well as in spirit, for such a crisis as it is likely to bring with it. When the fund of submission fails us, we have no other; and it seems that, liberally as we are disposed to draw upon that resource, there is not much more that¹ it can yield us. Though the East Indies should follow the West, though Ceylon and the Cape should go the same road as Martinico, St Domingo, and all the splendid possessions that we have purchased at the expense of the forces by which they were to be retained, yet it is not clear that the enemy will vouchsafe us peace; and still less clear is it, that the country could survive such a peace three years.

In this state it seems impossible, at least it is not to be wished, that the country should go on long without some great struggle,— a struggle to throw off this load of peccant matter that oppresses it, and to set the vital powers free, if they yet retain sufficient force and spring to recover us from the state of debility to which we are reduced. The idea of a country perishing, as we are doing, not by the course of nature, not by the decay of any vital part, hardly even by disease or sickness, but by the constraint of a situation, in which all our powers are rendered useless, and all our efforts serve only to exhaust ourselves, is more horrible than any other mode of ruin; and recalls to one's thoughts what I recollect to have read of, a year or two ago, of a man, who having wedged his hand in a rock on the sea-shore was held there till the tide flowed over and drowned him. We are fixed in a similar cleft; and here, I fear, we shall remain

¹ Misprinted (or miswritten?) *than*.

struggling and beating ourselves to pieces, till the great revolutionary tide pours over us and whelms us, never to be heard of more.

I cannot but think therefore, at such a moment, a letter like that which you had in contemplation would be of the most seasonable use, by showing to the country a way in which its zeal and energy, if it has any, may find vent. I have but little doubt that there is in the country a considerable deal of energy; at least, in comparison of anything that has yet appeared. But it is the want of knowing how to exert it that has repelled and kept it down.

The common feeling of people is, and that which sinks them into inaction and despondency, that there is nothing to be done; that every means have been tried, or at least that none now remains. The idea of offensive war is so totally lost; the means of such a war appear so totally exhausted; the ignorance of the people is so complete, or rather their ideas are so false, of the state of things in the maritime provinces, and of the effects to be produced there, if we were really to direct our efforts on that side, that they never will conceive of themselves the possibility of such a war, nor ever, I fear, be brought to it, except by being made to understand that peace is absolutely unattainable, and that an attack upon the coast of France is the only means of defence.

It must after all be confessed, that when the whole force of France and all its dependencies shall be transferred to this side, the dispositions of the royalists, aided by all the efforts that we can make, will find it sufficiently difficult to produce any effect. Still it is the only chance, and that which affords you the benefit of other chances;—the commotions namely, which may be expected in other parts of France, and which such diversion is most likely to bring on, as well as turn to account.

I have not an idea, while I am stating this, that such a plan will ever be attempted by the present Cabinet, nor would the attempt of bringing the country to such ideas be made with most advantage in their persons. But necessity may bring on something of the sort. Attempts continually made on our coasts may lead in the end to a return; commotions in France may again raise the Vendée and the Chouans; and thus a war be gradually formed in which the

royalists of both countries may find themselves united against that union which has long taken place between the Jacobins of the two countries. The difficulty, I fear, will be to find the royalists here. It will hardly be in Mr Fox and his friends ; and I do not think that among Mr Pitt's friends the spirit of royalty burns with too bright a flame.

The business of the fleet is as well over as such a thing can be. I am almost inclined to wish that the Admiralty had refused to comply, and tried the bringing home Jervis's fleet to stop any attempt of the mutineers to carry the fleet to the enemy ; depending upon the dissensions that would have arisen among them and the dread of consequences, when they had time to contemplate them, for reducing them to submission in the meantime.

What news may be in London at present, I don't know, as I write this from Fulham. The last gives the possibility of some turn that may save the Emperor from immediate submission ; but it is only a possibility. One anecdote of the Emperor I cannot forbear mentioning. When his courtiers were besieging him with demands for peace, and urging that Vienna must fall, he answered by saying, "Eh bien ! est ce que Vienne est l'Empire ?" The Emperor and Thugut however are the only persons who stand upon that ground. I believe we also have an Emperor here to do the same : but where is the Thugut ?

Farewell ! my dear sir. To keep as distant as possible one of the great Calamities of the time, take care of yourself ; conform to Dr Parry's directions ; and I should still be inclined to add, consent, now that you are going on so well, to let Dr Fraser be prepared with a knowledge of your case. I do not see what levity there could be in this ; and I certainly see the chance at least of some advantage.

I am, my dear sir, most truly yours

WM. WINDHAM.

Let me beg you to add my best respects to Mr^{rs} Burke, and compliments to the rest of your family.

BURKE TO WINDHAM¹.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 174.)

BATH, 26th April, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have not been so ill since you left me as not to have been able to make a beginning, if not a progress, in the execution of your commands ; but to do anything without raising a Spirit (I mean a National Spirit) with all the energy and much of the conduct of a Party Spirit, I hold to be a thing absolutely impossible ; and I hold it to be impossible to raise that Spirit whilst the Minister who ought to excite it and direct it, and to employ it for the purposes of his own existence, as well as that of his Master and his Country, is the very person who oppresses it ; and who, with double the expence and double the apparatus of every sort with which our most vigorous Wars were ever carried on, is resolved to make no War at all. Our only hope is in a submission to the Enemy by taking up the principles of that Enemy at home, and by submit[t]ing to any terms which the directing body of that Enemy abroad shall think fit to prescribe. If they demand Portsmouth as a cautionary town, it will be yielded to them ; and as to our Navy, that has already perished with its discipline for ever. I have my thoughts upon a modification, without a departure from the terms, of our late unhappy submission, but they are of no moment, because no attention will be paid to them. What cure for all this ? What but in that spirit "which might create a Soul under the ribs of Death" ? But to this end it is absolutely necessary that no terms within or without doors should be kept with the French party in our Parliament ; who must be treated as public Enemies, else they and the Head of the Republic abroad will infallibly overpower all the feeble force of a flying resistance. But can such a creature as I undertake the task, when the very Ministers, whom I *must by the necessity of the case support*, will the very next day, tho' without anything reciprocal on the part of their Enemies, will (*sic*) calmly discuss with them the merits of the public measures as

¹ In Nagle's hand.

if they were members of the same Cabinet, differing not in principle but upon some points more or less? Despairing as I do of anything that can be executed under this prevalence of no spirit, I should not at all despair of the people if they were roused. A Pamphlet has been sent to me called "Reasons against National despondency¹." It is ably written, and with regard to myself personally it is in one part very flattering, but it is all written upon the false principle of decorum and management with the persons whose Politics it opposes. This is the only tone which I suspect that those who support Ministry will bear, because the conduct of Ministers makes them look hourly for a change or for a compromise. Yet with all this before me I will endeavour to execute what you desire, tho' as disjoined from the rest of my plan it will lose something of its feeble effect. Another great difficulty there is, which consists in this: that the ministers must overthrow the whole legal establishment of their Army, and that speedily; else nothing can be done agreeably to our plans. I am clearly of Opinion that as we stand at present we are not in a posture, any more than a disposition, to take the only active measure of defence which remains to us, namely to make an active war in the territory of France. But I wish you would take a real view of our applicable strength, which I am not in a condition to do, and particularly with regard to what Cavalry could be got together here or in Ireland, after the fatal measure of disbanding several of the Corps of that kind which had been raised. Will you be so good as to furnish me with the details of the killed and wounded in this War on the Continent, as well as the List, if the Office contains it, of the killed and wounded in the Seven Years War, both on the Continent of Europe, in North America, and in the West Indies, including ours and the Provincial troops at the Havannah? I hope I am not over-immersed in details, but I cannot well go on without them. Unfortunately I cannot find that Quiberon Paper, but Nagle and I have hunted for it in vain. God bless you and preserve you to better times.

M^{rs} Burke always remembers you with affection and gratitude, and I can never think of my miserable health without a proper sensi-

¹ An answer to Erskine's *View of the Causes*.

bility to your uncommon solicitude about it. Except the difficulty of opening my body, I am otherwise better, and have [had] no bad night since you left us. Adieu, once more. God bless you.

Y^{rs} ever affectionately

EDM. BURKE.

The following verses were written before things came to their apparent worst point. There was still need for further "negative successes," for on 20 May broke out the more serious mutiny at the Nore, this time undoubtedly the work of a "sea-lawyer," a plausible scamp named Richard Parker, recently released from prison on condition of joining the Navy. The mischief spread to the North Sea fleet, then practically in presence of the enemy, and was only gradually quelled by a vigorous use of such resources as remained to the Admiralty in shore-batteries and the removal of the buoys and marks without which unskilled seamen could hardly find their way out of the Thames. It ended on 14 June in the surrender for trial and execution of the ringleader.

G. CANNING TO WINDHAM.

(Add. MS. 37844, f. 267.)

SPRING GARDENS. May 12, 1797.

Most Private.

Windham! whene'er thy fervent mind
Some thought, uncommon, just, refined,
In happiest phrase expresses;
Thy vulgar audience stare and gape,
And shout, and chuckle, at the *scrape*
Of "*Negative Successes.*"

2.

Oh tell me! does today's Event
 Serve to illustrate what you meant?
 —Or will the Soldiers riot?
 Oh! if the Guards have not rebell'd,
 And if the naval fray is quell'd,
 If Portsmouth yet is quiet;—

3.

Come Windham! celebrate with me
 This day of joy and jubilee,
 This day of no disaster!
 Our Government is *not* o'erturn'd—
 Huzza!—our Fleet has *not* been burn'd
 Our Army's *not* our Master.

G. C.

 BURKE TO WINDHAM¹.

(Add. MS. 37843, f. 187.)

BATH, 16th May, 1797.

6/

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You cannot be very much at a loss for the cause of my not answering your last Letter before this time, though its kindness well deserved my most early attention; but grief, shame, indignation, and utter despair have so fermented in my mind, as to produce there a disorder as strong as the fermentation which my food undergoes in my miserable stomach. What could I give you but one of my mental eructations? There is an end of us. The Revolution is accomplished, even before the Jacobin Peace. It has happened, as I long feared it would, that the danger has commenced in the very foundations of our false security. We have paid near £600,000 a year for the destruction of our Naval discipline and Naval fidelity for ever: and this unfortunate measure of buying mutiny and insubordination in the Navy has been followed by a beginning in the Army, which will run through the whole; and as most certainly it will be the measure, on such a peace as they will make, to keep up a great Military and

¹ Not in Burke's hand.

Naval establishment, the expence will be enormous. Among the people it will be a perpetual source of discontent; and in proportion as Troops and Seamen are idle and unemployed, in that proportion will be their disposition to every species of insubordination. But among all the parts of this fatal measure the Mission of my Lord Howe has been by far the most mischievous. Had a great Naval Commander been sent down—"Gravem pietate et meritis virum quem"—to awe the seditious into obedience, it would have been the best thing that could have been thought of; but to send the first name in the Navy, and who had been but lately a Cabinet Minister and First Lord of the Admiralty, at upwards of 70 years of age, to hunt amongst mutineers for grievances, to take the Law from Joice, a seditious Clubist of Belfast, and to remove by his orders some of the principal Officers of the Navy, puts an end to all hopes for ever. Such mischief need not to have been attended with so much degradation. There is an amnesty for rebellion, but none for Officers who do their duty. They, and they only, are punished and degraded. The Mutineers now choose their own Officers, or have at least a Negative on them, and all officers who go to sea are apprized of the tenures by which they hold, and must, in future, comport themselves, not as Naval Commanders, but as Candidates at an election. All this is the fruit of the snug system of our plan in a Home defence. I see by the Irish Gov^t Newspapers that 8,000 men have been either sent, or are sending, to Ireland to support a Military Government there under the auspices of that Junto to which both Kingdoms are sacrificed. Do you really believe, or does any one believe, that such a military Government can be supported by the joint finances of both Nations? I am sure Ireland can contribute little or nothing towards it. I see they are making a run, through the most contemptible wretch on earth, Lord Dillon¹, and another, not much less so, a Mr Day, at my friend Doctor Hussey², upon account of his zeal in strengthening his flock according to his principles against the religious persecution which, under pretence of military discipline, has been exercized against the Roman Catholic soldiery. Excuse me if I speak my mind freely. These people have perfidiously

¹ Charles, 12th Viscount Dillon.

² Thomas Hussey, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

quarreled upon this very head with one of the worthiest, most disinterested, most able and most zealous friends that Government ever had. When the Duke of Portland sent him to Ireland, he declared to His Grace in the fullest manner, that if it was intended that he should go over for the purpose of deluding any of those of his own communion, and particularly, the Catholic Military to whom he was appointed Chaplain-General, into an acquiescence under oppression or persecution, that He never would act that part; and explained himself in the same manner to Mr Pelham. But I see that the plan is to remove, and if possible to destroy, any of that religion who will not be their tools in establishing a Jacobin indifference to all religion; and a hatred to the ruling one among the common people, who are altogether composed of Catholics, and who if they have not that religion, will have no other. It is all over with the Peace and property of that Kingdom. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever faithfully and affectionately

y^{rs}

EDM. BURKE.

There is nothing that gives me so much consolation as that I have opened my mind very fully on Irish affairs to Mr Dundas, in two conversations which lasted for four hours. I entered into the minutest details concerning Ireland, to make him sensible of the consequences of what was then doing, and I must do him the Justice to say, that he heard me not only with great patience, but with the utmost humanity and kindness, though I very soon found, that neither my laborious remonstrance nor his indulgent hearing produced any effect whatsoever for the purpose I had so much at Heart—the Peace of Ireland, its consolidation with this Kingdom, and a direction of our common force against our common Enemy.

Here the letters to Windham end. The *Correspondence* contains a few later letters to others (22–28 May), and the story of his illness is told in the letters of his physicians and of Woodford in Add. MS. 37843. He died on 9 July 1797.

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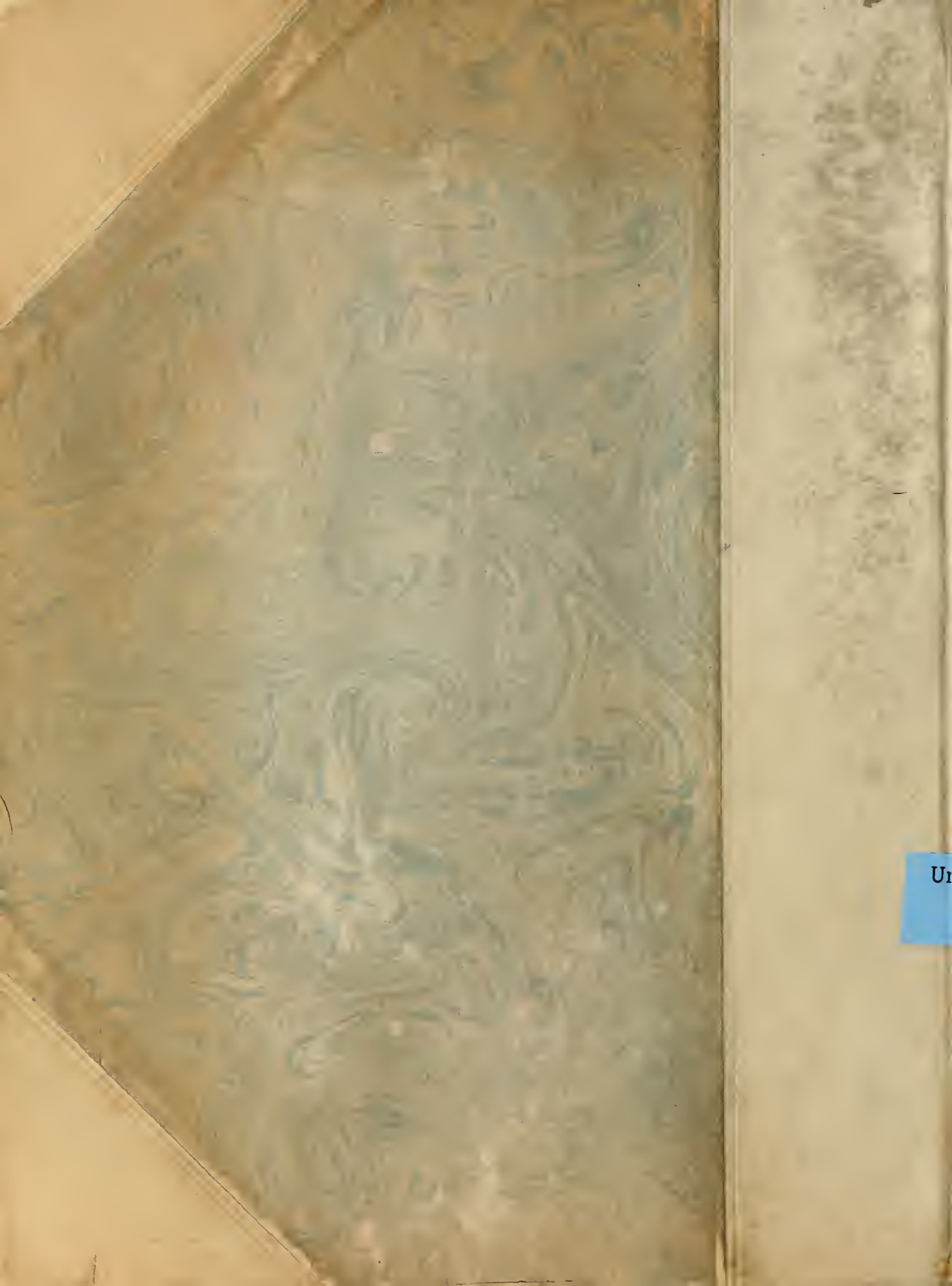
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